DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 213 701 SP 019 845

AUTHOR Burlingame, Martin
TITLE Social Settings in Educational Organizations: An Exploratory Study of Deliberate Segregation and Change in Schools.
INSTITUTION Illinois Univ., Champaign. Coll. of Education.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, D.C. Educational Policy and Organization Program.
PUB DATE Aug 81
GRANT NIE-G-80-0160
NOTE 100p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Change; Educational Environment; Intergroup Relations; *Interpersonal Relationship; *Peer Groups; Personal Space; Problem Solving; Secondary Education; *Secondary School Teachers; *Social Behavior; *Social Isolation; Socialization; Social Structure; Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

The faculty lounge of a junior high school was chosen as the site for observation of teachers in this study of social interactions and attitudes. The study focused on the effect of the segregation or isolation of the individual teacher (who functions as an autonomous unit in the classroom) upon the school as an organization and upon attempts to bring about educational change. The teachers were segregated from each other by the organizational pattern and physical layout of the school. However, they shared common classroom problems as well as other problems. Conversation in the faculty lounge consisted mainly of brief, sporadic interchanges that were casually social in nature. It was observed that, for the most part, classroom realities were the main topic of their short conversational exchanges. They discussed the difficulties of controlling a class, particular students, the nature of adolescent students, and the necessity of teaching certain subjects. Discussion of the problems of being a teacher centered around rewards and drawbacks, the effects of teaching upon themselves, their public image, and the lack of support from parents and the community. The teachers, however, saw themselves as a generally good group of people doing a good job. They perceived themselves as a unit within the larger organizational framework of the school system, and, within the parameters of their own classrooms, powerful. The efforts of teachers to clarify their individuality and commonality suggest that those who propose changes at the school level must be aware not only of classroom realities but also of teachers' problems. Teachers will resist change they feel has no clear or immediate value for their students or themselves. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED213701

SP

Social Settings in Educational Organizations: An Exploratory Study of Deliberate Segregation and Change in Schools

Martin Burlingame, Principal Investigator
Department of Administration, Higher,
and Continuing Education
College of Education
University of Illinois

August, 1981

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Funding for this research was provided by NIE Grant #80-0160. However, the content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of that Agency, and no official endorsement of these materials should be inferred.

SP 015 845

Table of Contents

Introduction
- Social Settings
- Schools as Organizations
- Reporting Impermanent Settings
- Researcher Bias
- Structure of Report

Organizational Segregation and Teacher Separateness
- Organizational Scheduling
- Subject Matter Preparation
- Classroom Uniqueness

The Faculty Lounge and Teacher Talk
- Classroom Realities
  - Ambiguity of control
  - Particular students
  - Nature of the age group of students
  - Necessity of teaching subjects
  - Summary: Classroom realities
- Teacherhood Problems
  - Teacher rewards
  - Effects of teaching on self
  - Public images of teachers
  - Failure of others
  - Summary: Teacherhood problems

Social Settings, Deliberate Segregation and Change
- Teacher Separateness and Classroom Change
- Classroom Realities and Classroom Change
- Teacherhood Problems and School Change
- Educational System and Education Change

Summary
- Recap
- Speculations
  - Amount of teacher talk
  - The sense of the system
  - Boundaries
  - Teacher's knowledge

References

Appendix: Methodology of the Study

Introduction

Field notes:

10/30/1 Never get caught in the hall on change of classes!

10/30/6 Physical maturity at junior high school age--a lovely girl, mature and womanly, holding hands with boy who doesn't even come up to her shoulder --halls as "interesting"

c1/11/13 NOTE: when going around corner in elementary, always swing wide--little kids run in halls unless watched

c3/11/13 playground--elementary teacher hugging boy who fell and hurt himself

16/11/13 Lounge: lunch--teacher: "I'm going to get out my machine gun and kill them [students]."

The sky, through the streaked windows of the faculty lounge of City Junior High School, is gray and threatening. The light fixtures in the ceiling remove some of the gloom, but the tightly closed windows trap in the smells of too many cigarettes, of slightly souring lunch sacks, and of the stale, sweet dregs in the almost empty pop bottles stored in the wooden cartons in the corner.

The observer sits, relaxed and slightly bored on the couch. On the cheap lamp stand near his elbow, the ashtray overflows with partially smoked cigarette butts which threaten to dull the flavor of his half-drunk bottle of diet pop. On the couch lays the ever present cassette tape recorder and an extra 5 x 9 notebook. In his lap is another, slightly dirty 5 x 9 notebook, and a cheap pen is poised in his right hand. He glances at the wall clock, noting in the notebook: "1:40 pm--lounge has one teacher."

Seated at the table nearest the refrigerator and pop machine is an English teacher rapidly grading a dittoed test recently taken by her students. In her late fifties or early sixties, Mrs. Brown is neatly dressed in white blouse, open vest and matching slacks. Her white hair is in impeccable

order, weaving and curling about her head and above her carefully made up face. She draws deeply, almost sensually, on her second cigarette since entering the lounge and continues her attack on her students' works. While her back is not completely turned to the observer, her posture makes clear her intentions to finish grading and to avoid idle chatter.

Mrs. Brown had entered Room 121, "Faculty Lounge," approximately twenty-five minutes earlier. Several of her fellow teachers were leaving to meet their fifth period classes. Most had eaten lunch in the lounge, smoked carefully their cigarettes, and chatted with colleagues. Some pulled lunches from the refrigerator, others brought trays from the cafeteria, and many put quarters in the pop machine. Conversations swirled around the room, leap-frogging in typical fashion from TV shows to illnesses in their families to the attitudes of parents today to the upcoming school assembly. A couple of off-color jokes were shared, some good natured ribbing occurred, and one of the more attractive young female teachers was teased about her recently announced pregnancy. Most of those in the lounge appeared obviously relaxed, sprawling casually on the couches or the chairs and tables. Most wore casual, neat clothes.

Frequently the observer is drawn into conversations. He has become not only a fixture in the lounge a couple afternoons each week but also has interviewed two teachers currently enjoying lunch hour. At times he makes brief notes in his book, or jots down the time. Most seem to now view this behavior as normal. During this lunch period he has heard one new joke and one told to him twice already that day, debated the merits of a new restaurant and shared in a conversation between two teachers about the problems of a "common" student.

But the end of the last lunch meant the return of quiet to the lounge. Mrs. Brown chatted politely for a moment, then pointedly noted her need to finish her classes papers, and began working after sweeping crumbs off one of the tables, and checking the chair seat for an idle dollop of catsup or mustard.

The door swings open and Mr. Swink and Mrs. O'Brien enter the lounge. They had met in the office, and decided to share a pop. Both are well-liked members of the faculty, and engaging people. Mr. Swink has taught in the City School System for nearly twenty years. During that time he has earned a reputation as a decent teacher, but exceptionally good at dealing with problem kids. His own divorce, his struggles to bring up three children, and his many female friends all suggest a warm, sweet, and concerned human being. He is generally liked by everyone, although he is an admitted "warm-fuzzy."

Mrs. O'Brien has been in the system just four years while her husband completes his medical residency in a local hospital. She is attractive, intellectually alert, and well-respected by her peers. The "better" kids enjoy her classes, but she has earned a reputation of being "hard on" slower students. She can handle them, but her sharp tongue and her lack of sympathy with their problems means that few stay in her classes long. Or, if they do, they receive low grades. She holds some office this year in the teacher association.

Both had been working in their rooms, and had drifted to the office to check their mailboxes. As they enter the lounge, Mr. Swink lights up a cigarette, draws deeply, and dramatically acts out a smoker's cough. Both laugh, spy the observer smiling, and say "Hi" to everybody. Mrs. Brown smiles sweetly, and hunches back over her papers. The incomers politely

ignore Mrs. Brown, and select seats facing the observer. They both suggest that they are thirsty, and match quarters to see who "buys." Mrs. O'Brien loses, and Mr. Swink comments about his great love for "women's lib." The observer notes their time of arrival, and shifts slightly so he may write notes less obtrusively.

Over the next ten minutes topics come and go in no particular order. Mrs. O'Brien is quizzed about the progress of her husband; Mr. Swink comments on his hopes that his son will return to high school after a six month vacation. Both grumble about the timing of the assembly--"all wrong"--and about the need for a vacation--"all right." They visit with the observer about a new movie in town, and abruptly shift to concerns about the absence of a female student they share in thier different classes. Swink worries she might be pregnant while Mrs. O'Brien is convinced her home situation is simply a mess. She thinks the father may be beating both the wife and this girl.

The topic of Christmas vacation, and escaping from the winter, is lightly touched on as is the fight which broke out in the halls yesterday. Neither saw the action, and both have heard conflicting opinions of its cause and possible significance. (This is the fourth time, the observer notes, he has heard about this fight. It has been described differently each time. Maybe he should see the Vice-Principal and get the "official" version.)

Mrs. O'Brien glances at the clock and comments that in ten minutes the "wars" begins--again. She and Mr. Swink smile, and then begin a new topic of conversation, the rapidly increasing price of gasoline. Both worry about its consequences.

Mrs. Brown shuts her official grade book, sighs and turns her chair so that the conversational pattern is now a circle, not a triangle. Without

missing a beat, she not only laments the failure of her students to understand the notion of a paragraph but also that the family car now costs twenty-five dollars to fill. Mr. Swink is glad he drives a Volkswagen, but agrees that this year's eighth graders are poorly prepared in writing. Most can't tell a topical sentence from a cigarette. With chuckles, Mrs. Brown and O'Brien comment that most know what to do with a cigarette.

The lounge door opens and a female teacher enters, smiles and goes into the restroom. Mr. O'Brien crushes out his cigarette, rises and drifts slowly toward the door. The two women rise, Mrs. Brown collects her materials, and all three smile at the observer and head toward the door. Mrs. Brown's remarks about stopping at the office are cut off by the door closing. In the restroom, the toilet is flushed and the teacher leaves.

It is now 2:25 pm, and the lounge is empty. The observer notes both of these facts, and begins filling in some of the details from the just finished conversations. Once again he laments the disorderliness of talk in the lounge, the swift shifts from topic to topic and field to field. Nothing is orderly or coherent. He arises, puts his empty pop bottle in the rack, and purchases his third of the afternoon. He once again mentally notes that the "next time" he does this study one budget line will be for "refreshments," and sits down. By now that has become one of the inside jokes he tells himself about doing "naturalistic" research when time drags in the lounge. It is 2:28 pm, the lounge is empty, and he wonders who will shortly enter to rest, smoke, gossip, work or escape children. Maybe no one, or maybe two or three teachers. But at this moment, the lounge is empty, smelly and quiet.

Social Settings

It seems a trivially true fact of social intercourse that where you are and who you are talking to limits the ways you speak and the topics you discuss. These etiquettes of social settings make possible, for instance, comfortable exchanges among friends, ritualistic interactions with strangers, and formalistic encounters between supervisors and subordinates.

This report chronicles a junior high school lounge as a social setting for teachers in that building.[1] As a social setting, the most typical aspect from the perspective of an observer is the disjointed nature of conversation in the lounge. The lounge was a place of frequent comings-and-goings, sharing a sense of impermanence with settings such as an airline terminal or bus stop. Teachers dropped in to get away from it all, to grab a quick cigarette, to use the restroom, to buy a pop or to eat lunch. On a nearly minute by minute basis the cast playing in the lounge changed. Nobody seemed to be around always or even on a very regular schedule about coming to the lounge.

And when teachers were in the lounge they visited with friends, conducted necessary business with other teachers, and relaxed in the relative peace and quiet of colleagues. They thought nothing of abruptly shifting from chats about family to discussions of important issues facing the school to analyses about their particular group of students. The conversational topics had little or no coherence. They come and go as quickly as most teachers. What can the lounge, then, tell us about schooling? Are such impermanent social settings that important?

1. Initital plans included observations in both an elementary school lounge and a junior high school lounge. As discussed later, observations were "impossible" in the elementary lounge because teachers had no preparation periods.

The setting of social enterprises has been a characteristic concern of inquiry in the behavioral sciences. In psychology Brunswik (1956) wrote that:

> ...proper sampling of situations and problems may in the end be more important than proper sampling of subjects, considering the fact that individuals are probably on the whole much more alike than are situations among one another (p. 39).

A standard text about the field of anthropology suggests that:

> ...the anthropologist should attempt to locate people in space. Mapping such things as where persons live, which way their doors face, where their fields lie, the locations of the religious centers, of water, of pasture, and so on, may help tell a story about the condition of present social relations in the community and may indicate some reasons for their coming about (Edgerton and Langness, 1974, p. 27-28).

In geography Sorre underscores the importance of "social space" as a way not only of understanding how individual social groups reflect their particular values, preferences and aspirations but also of mapping by means of density the interactions among different groups (Buttimer, 1969).

In the study of organizations, Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) examined the problematic relation between differentiation and integration. Examining firms from three different industries (plastics, standard containers, and packaged foods), they found all firms in all industries to be divided (differentiated) into divisions such as sales, research or production. The members in each of these divisions (settings) behaved differently from workers in other divisions (settings).

Lawrence and Lorsch demonstrated that the degree of differentiation of firms was related to the complexity and differentiation in the environment. For example, in plastics the environment changed rapidly and customers requested more complex products. Plastics firms, in response to these environmental demands, became more differentiated to meet both short- and long-term environmental requests. In contrast, in the standard container

industry some firms were less differentiated because the environment was relatively stable (no new products had been introduced for twenty years).

Each of the firms in these industries faced the problem of integrating these differentiated divisions (settings). Some collaboration was essential if firms were to exist. In each of these industries different forms of conflict resolution strategies were developed. In the plastics industry, again, firms had relatively low level divisions or individuals who worked between conflicting divisions (settings). These conflict resolution divisions or individuals had specific knowledge needed to deal with conflicting divisions. In contrast, in the container industry almost all decisions were made by top level management (settings).

In education the most frequently studied setting has been the classroom. (See, for instance, Barr and Dreeben, 1978, and Doyle, 1978.) The primary focus of educational work in ecological psychology has been the identification, description and analysis of educational environments within classrooms. (Also see works of Barker and Gump, 1964; Barker, 1968; and Kounin, 1970.) While less frequently studied, the entire school has been the setting for important studies, for instance, of educational innovation (Smith and Keith, 1971), of student life (Cusick, 1973), and of spread of information (Hanson and Ortiz, 1975). What has <u>not</u> been studied well is how the various settings to be found in a single school (classrooms, faculty lounge, custodian's office, and principal's office, for example) influence such topics as the process of communication or the practices of control in that school.

Hence, our own social common sense and several fields of social inquiry suggest the importance of knowing the setting where actions occur. This report is an exploratory study of a faculty lounge as a setting in a junior high school. Using semi-structured interviews and observations, the investigator sought to describe and to analyze what teachers talked about in the

faculty lounge. What educational topics were talked about in the lounge? Which educational concerns were prevalent or ignored? What does the faculty lounge as a social setting tell us about teachers and schools? Before turning to such questions, this introduction sets the stage for the report by discussing: first, the general point of departure for this study; second, the particular biases of the investigator; and, finally, the structure of this report.

Schools as Organizations

A burgeoning literature suggests that schools, if not all educational institutions, are characterized not only by ambiguous goals but also by the likelihood of conflict among supporters of these contending goals (Benoit, 1975; Bidwell, 1965; Cohen and March, 1974; Elboim-Dror, 1970; Frank, 1958-59; Harper, 1965; Prebble, 1978; Warner and Haven, 1968; and Weick, 1976).

Despite the spate of literature about conflict, on the surface schools appear calm, almost tranquil, institutions. Few observers of everyday life in schools report major outbreaks of rancorous conflict over goals, or lengthy debates in legislative-like settings about what ought to be done in classrooms. In fact, such activities are usually rare enough to attract the attention of researchers (Smith and Keith, 1971; Berman and McLaughlin, 1979, for examples), or to be called to the attention of other practitioners in journals such as Phi Delta Kappan.

It would seem that schools may have ambiguous and conflicting goals, but schools also have many social mechanisms for reducing consequences--both advantageous and harmful--of conflict. While many different social mechanisms may exist for reducing uncertainties created by ambiguous and potentially conflicting goals, this report is concerned with only one: the deliberate segregation of social settings as a device to reduce opportunities for conflict.

After exploring deliberate segregation, our attention will turn to the consequences of segregation on change in schools.

Certainly other means come to mind as ways of reducing conflict in schools. For instance, the simple physical layout of the school building locates individual teachers in their separate classrooms. They may simply close their doors, and be isolated from criticism by others. Lortie has dubbed this the "egg-crate ecology" of the school plant. Or, as Sergiovanni has suggested, the training and socialization of educational workers into separate professional roles reduces conflict. It is difficult for elementary teacher and secondary teachers to discuss their craft, or for guidance counselors, special education teachers, vocational technical education teachers, mathematics teachers, social studies teachers, and so on and on, to simply talk to each other.

Both physical separation and trained separation may serve to keep teachers in ignorance of their differences. Moore and Tumin (1949) suggest that one of the functional consequences of ignorance is "to protect the traditional normative structure... through reinforcing the assumption that deviation from the rules is statistically insignificant" (p. 79). In the body of this report, much shall be made of the role not only of ignorance but also of knowing "how the system works."

Finally, this lack of conflict in schools may be explained by a rapidly growing literature which suggests that schools are best viewed as if they were "organized anarachies" (Cohen and March, 1974), "loosely coupled system" (Weick, 1976), permeated by "structural looseness" (Bidwell, 1965), and marked by high levels of "goal dissensus" (Prebble, 1978). While clearly evocative both in terms of practice and of research, the elaboration of these notions has been dominated by three assumptions which deserve some examination.

One assumption made in much of this "loose coupling" literature is that individuals act, then intend. That is, after acting individuals retroactively make sense of what has happened. In a loosely coupled organization, then, we should expect that individuals act out their organizational roles, and after acting ascribe reasons to what has been accomplished. People thus can make sense of any situation--after the situation is over. This flexibility permits individuals, and in turn the organizations, to react in differing ways to environmental cues. The organization is adaptive because individuals within its boundaries are able to make sense of their worlds--even if the organization has no single world to which it interacts. Such adaptiveness may reduce conflict.

The argument for social settings which drives much of this report suggests a different explanation for loose coupling. Individuals often intend to accomplish something in organizational settings, e.g., teachers seek to teach students about the War of 1812. These intentions alert them to opportunities within the organization. Nonetheless, opportunitites are linked to social settings. By structuring what may or may not be talked about, social settings segregate or de-couple opportunities. Hence, intendedly rational actors in the organization who inhabit certain social settings are functionally ignorant (Moore and Tumin, 1949) of opportunities or of conflicts which could occur if they had perfect knowledge of the organization. The result is loose coupling --various responses by actors in various social settings to environmental cues. What is markedly different in this explanation is why loose coupling occurs. Again, later sections of this report touch on this issue.

A second assumption made in much of the loose coupling literature is that the organization constitutes a relatively homogeneous social setting. The

case studies found in March and Olson (1976), for example, use as thei- settings sites such as universities or the San Francisco Unified School District. While evocative, this general lack of sensitivity to various social settings within a single large organization seems suspect. This insensitivity to various social settings in an organization permeates much of the literature on schools. It also provides little purchase on understanding the absence of conflict in schools.

An example might help clarify this concern. The last half dozen years have witnessed an interesting series of studies done in schools using the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) instrument (Willower, 1975). The instrument assesses the relative humanistic or custodial ideology of educators toward students. The instrument began as part of a participant observation study done by Willower and Jones in teacher lounges. What they were struck by in this social setting was the large amount of discussion about pupil control (discipline). From this insight Willower and others developed the PCI instrument. Several pieces of research using the scale have found that teachers become more custodial with experience. Nonetheless, when Willower and Helsel (1974) developed a Pupil Control Behavior (PCB) instrument to assess the relation between ideology and classroom behavior, they found ideology and behavior to be "imperfectly" associated (correlation of .37).

In terms of social settings, one would expect to find that the way individuals talk and behave in one setting (a teachers' lounge) would differ on important dimensions in another setting such as the classroom of an individual teacher or the completing of a scale. In contrast to what Willower and Jones found in a faculty lounge, Newberry (1978) found that experienced teachers in their classrooms rarely helped other teachers, even if those who were floundering about were beginning teachers with serious problems. Newberry

noted that in their classrooms beginning teachers who were having problems controlling student behavior "tried to disguise the extent of ... control problems from other teachers" (p. 52). Settings may well determine what gets talked about and what happens. What needs attending to is the numerous settings in a single organization, and the "imperfect" relations among these social settings in schools. This report makes a start at this large, but important, task.

A third, and final, assumption of the loose coupling literature is that no single individual has a grasp of the entire organization. The totality of a loosely coupled organization seems so divergent that only microscopic views are possible. A larger, more macroscopic view is difficult, if not impossible, because of the difficulty of reconciling several different actors diverse views of any situation. This diversity and complexity requires any single actor to compress and condense these vast amounts of often contrasting information so that any larger view is distorted and out of focus.

Approaching this assumption from the perspective of social settings, one could argue that no single actor ever grasps all the nuances of any single setting or the vagaries of many different settings in a single organization. Nonetheless, experienced actors have maps of the numerous settings in a single organization, and have guide books for acting appropriately in singular settings. Principals, for instance, may know that the faculty lounge is "off-limits" or students may know that the faculty lounge is where teachers go to be "un-teacherly," e.g., smoke, swear, gossip and sleep. While the totality of settings may provide a lush organizational environment, that totality will not be comprehensible to many in the organization.

We unfortunately have little sense of how individuals who have complete maps of organizations react either to internal or external demands for change.

Two alternatives come to mind--those who know much may be conservative about change because they see all the pitfalls which could arise when settings are disturbed. Or, those who know much may be positive to change because they see all the opportunities that arise when settings are disturbed. Finally, there is always the distinct possibility that attitudes toward change are divorced completely from access to settings.

This report, therefore, begins with these sorts of concerns in mind. How segregated are the workers in the school setting? How calm and tranquil are settings in schools? Are schools, and their settings, loosely coupled? How much change is likely, or even talked about, in a school? This report does not answer these questions definitively, but it does touch on these and other issues found to be related to settings in schools. By fixing on the teachers' lounge the report inspects the one site in schools where teachers can on a daily basis meet with colleagues. By its very nature, then, the lounge is <u>the</u> major site in the school where teacher-to-teacher conversation predominates. And it is this teacher-to-teacher conversation in the lounge setting which is the point of departure for this analysis.

Reporting Impermanent Settings

Reporting conversation is difficult under the best of circumstances. The normal ebb-and-flow of everyday talk is bound up in context, intonation and gesture. Trying to capture the richness of teacher conversations in the lounge provided numerous frustrations for the investigator as omissions seemed inevitable.

Missing from this report are two aspects of teacher conversation. First, teacher talk is so disjointed that no long, episodic segments are presented. The longest conversation reported took at most two to three minutes. In

place of these richer episodes, episodes which present a sense of continuity, the investigator presents small bits of conversation. These bits introduce each of the later sections. While they are weaker substitutes for conversation, these bits are more accurate pictures of the disjointed and fragmentary nature of teacher talk in the faculty lounge.

Second, the comings-and-goings of teachers in the lounge meant that talk shifted with almost every entry or exit. If a coach left, for example, discussions about school sports often ended abruptly. In that sense, the investigator tried to link conversations to participant. But the frequency of movement often meant that conversations seemed to start or to end abruptly. Infrequently, some conversations seemed to be picked up in the middle. Again, the use of short bits suggests the choppy, fragmentary sense of teacher talk in the lounge. While a longer and more complex narrative might have enhanced reading, it would have been false to the bits and pieces which constitute teacher talk.

Researcher Bias

It is not only traditional but also important to understand and to appreciate the background of an investigator in a study depending upon semi-structured interviews and observations. Those who have examined these methodologies for generating data stress their susceptibilities to bias. This investigator is conscious of four major sources of bias on his part.

First, and perhaps most importantly, the investigator has spent more than two decades in the field of education. Of particular importance for this study is the fact that the investigator was a high school teacher for five years, and has been a college professor for eleven years. These experiences meant that schools were familiar places, that school people were seen as col-

leagues, and that education was viewed as a noble profession. This favorable orientation to schools and their occupants provided the larger canvas on which other biases may have been elaborated.

A second bias is this investigator's preoccupation with the effects of external political and policy decisions on schools. This theme can be elaborated as interests in politics and education, and in implementation of change. As politics and education scholarship has developed over the last two decades, much attention has fixed on forces seeking to shape school finances, curriculum, facilities, personnel and operating procedures. Equally, studies concerned with the implementation of innovations have examined how change has come or been modified or thwarted by schoolpeople. Both may have infiltrated aspects of the study.

The third bias consisted of the investigator's interest in schools as organizations. The works of the 1970's--particularly those of James G. March and Karl Weick--argued that schools were not rational, tightly-coupled bureaucracies but instead were autonomous, loosely-coupled collectives. Authors following the suggestions of March and Weick produced pictures of schools as out-of-focus organizations--goals were not clear, means were not reliable, and participants were not permanent. Again, my bias toward these notions may have accentuated the "non-rational" in the lounge.

The final bias was selection of sites. The schools selected were not only convenient but also clearly very good schools. The investigator sought out schools whose principals knew him personally, whose teachers were frequently in the investigator's classes at the University, and whose students generally came from "good" homes. They were cooperative sites: they may be unusual schools, atypical for generalizations.

These four biases infected the investigator throughout the process of creating this report. The task of the investigator during this process was to discount these leanings by being sensitive to the selection of interviewees, the questions asked and the observations recorded.

A simple illustration from the field notes may clarify and illuminate some of this concern about bias. The note is as follows:

> 7/10/30 approx. 11:00 am[2/] Walking in hall from Assistant Principal's office to set up interview--saw Mrs. Harold (English) talking earnestly to boy--tall, 9th (?)--overheard disciplining about "attitude"

That evening the investigator wrote in the "Interpretation" section as follows:

> The teacher-pupil discipline situation today left me with several feelings. First, embarrassment. I was intruding on a very private discussion in a hall. Second, the teacher was a good head shorter than the student. She was really all over him about his "attitude." Third, it brought back a flood of memories of similar actions by me--"pinning the kid to the wall."
>
> Think about how private the whole event was. The teacher left the classrom door open, the hallway is frequently traveled, and their voices obviously carried.
>
> Also think about how you would have written up if studying discipline. Whose side? How public/private? Control.

The longer the investigator ponders this incident, the more conscious he has become to the fact (and importance) of his "identification" with the teacher in this situation. Such identifications suggest sensitivity to bias is a necessity, not a luxury.

Structure of Report

The report itself consists of three major sections. The first deals with the segregation of settings in schools. Teachers may, if they choose, separate themselves almost completely from other teachers. The first section

---

2. All materials in the field notes are coded by school, date and time. The time used was that last noted, e.g., "approx. 11:00 am" means the last time noted in the field notes was 11:00 am. A time of "11:04 am" means that as the note was written the time was noted. All names are "false."

chronicles this separateness, and speculates about its origins. The second section concentrates on the faculty lounge. What gets talked about by teachers in tne lounge of the junior high schools? The third section discusses social settings and change in schools. Its mission is more speculative --given settings and given teacher talk in a lounge, what can we say about opportunities for changing schools?

Organizational Segregation and Teacher Separateness

Teachers in City Elementary School and City Junior High School do not have much time to spend with fellow teachers during the normal school day.[3] At City Elementary School (CES) teachers have no preparation period and only thirty minutes for lunch. At City Junior High School (CJHS), teachers have a preparation period and fifty minutes for lunch. But considerations of scheduling at CJHS mean that teachers preparation periods are designed so that teachers of the same subject generally do not have preparation periods at the same time. The need to offer courses throughout the eight period day at CJHS means that teachers of different subjects, not the same subject, generally are "free" during the same period. Thus, the first element in teacher separateness is organizational scheduling.

Moreover, when teachers are free at the same time, differences in subject matter preparation and teaching style limit the range of conversations. Stated in an extreme form, Special Education teachers in the junior high school have significantly different subject matter preparation and teaching style from Industrial Arts teachers. Both these groups of teachers differ from Geography teachers, and all three groups are different from Art teachers. At the elementary school first and sixth grade teachers are different not in what they feel they must teach but also in ways they believe they can teacher. The second element in teacher separateness, then, is subject matter preparation.

---

3. Initial observations were done both in an elementary and in a junior high school. This section rests on work completed in both schools.

But even these differences pale when teachers talk about how they teach in their individual rooms. Their experiences with their classes, and less frequently with a student or small groups of students, or even more infrequently before a supervisor, are unique. This uniqueness is grounded on the history of that particular teacher, the history of that particular class, and that particular moment that exists among actors in that particular setting. Teachers, however, do not see themselves as "performing" for others on the "stage" of their classroom: they are a part of a very real, existential happening--unique, different from but akin to other days in other classrooms. These classroom moments are the core of a category of unique experiences to be labeled "educational." The third, and final, element in teacher separateness is classroom uniqueness.

This section will elaborate these three elements of teacher separateness: organizational scheduling, subject matter preparation and classroom uniqueness. The condition of teacher separateness is at the heart of organizational segregation. (See Figure 1.)

Organizational Scheduling. At CJHS there are nearly 1,200 students in grades seven, eight and nine. These students are taught by a full and part-time faculty of about 70 teachers and fed, administered, cleaned-up after, counselled, librariied, and secretaried by another 35 or so people. A major responsibility of the administration, working with counselors, is getting students and teachers together so that the eight 50-minute period classes of the school day can take place. The various required and elective courses, as well as the differing skill levels of courses offered, mean that most courses need to be available to students any one of the periods of the school day. Counselors, teachers, and administrators all seek to create classes which meet the school district requirements, are offered at convenient times for students, and provide opportunities for satisfactory (if not better) learning.

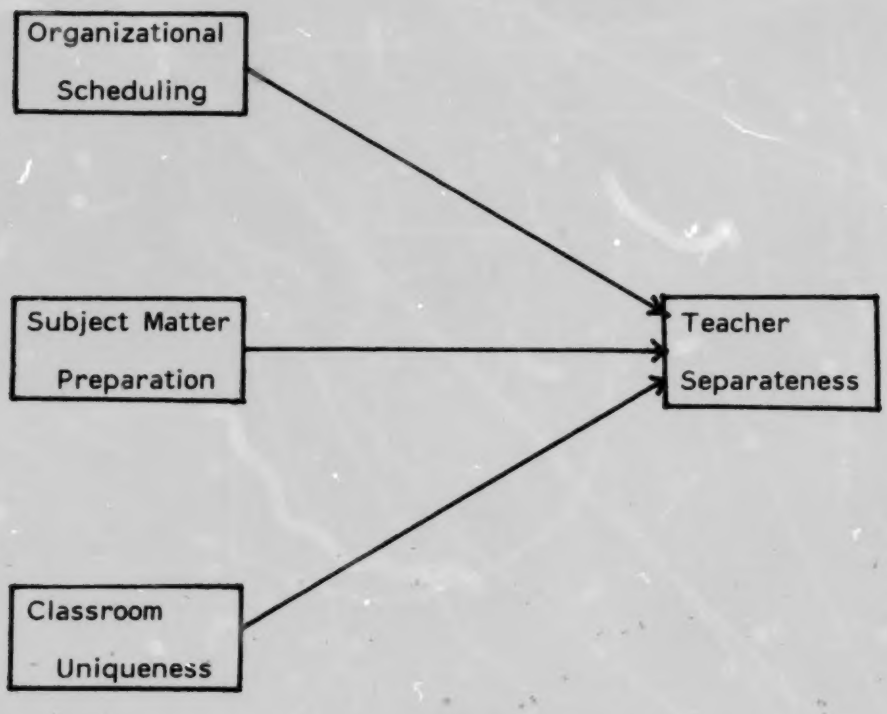

Figure 1. Major elements in teacher separateness.

The need to offer sufficient courses means that preparation periods usually do not permit teachers of the same subject to have the same period free. Table 1 displays the teacher preparation periods by subjects at CJHS. Several points are of interest. First, the discrepancies between numbers of teachers, preparation periods and lunch periods are created by the employment of part-time teachers, the use of expert teachers (e.g., music) who visit CJHS as part of a circuit of schools they teach in each day, and the fact that a few teachers do not receive a formal preparation period. Second, during periods 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8 most teachers are teaching. Only during lunch periods (4, 5 and 6) are a large part of the faculty not teaching. Third, only in rare instances do two or more teachers in the same subject field have similar preparation periods. An inspection of these cases shows: in English, in period 1 an 8th and 9th grade teacher are preparing and in period 2, two 7th grade, one eighth grade and one teacher of both 7th and 9th grade classes are preparing; in Mathematics, in period 1 an algebra and 8th grade math teacher, a gemometry and 7th grade math teacher, an 8th and 9th basic math, and 8th grade math teacher are preparing and in period 3, a math lab and science teacher, an 8th and 9th basic math, and 9th grade math teacher are preparing; in Physical Education the period 3 preparation is shared by a 7th grade and an 8th grade teacher; finally, in Special Services (Special Education) the 7th period preparation is shared by six teachers who all work with handicapped children. Four of these teachers work with students who have learning disabilities. This analysis suggests that it is rare for teachers of the same grade subject matter to be preparing during the same period. The noteable exception is in the area of special education services.

Table 1

Teacher Lunch Periods and

Preparation Periods by Subjects in CJHS

Subject Area	Periods 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Number of Teachers in Subject Area
English	2	4	-	-	-	1	1	-	8
Mathematics	3	-	2	-	1	1	-	1	9
Social Studies	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	1	6
Science	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	5
Foreign Language	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	6
Physical Education	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	1	7
Art	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	3
Home Economics	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Industrial Arts	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Reading Lab	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Special Services	-	1	1	-	1	-	6	-	12
Music	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Totals	8	8	8	1	2	6	12	6	51 / 69
Lunch	-	-	-	21	21	12	-	-	

Stated differently, the organizational need to offer classes the entire day meant that except for lunch very few teachers with similar courses had the opportunity to be in sites such as the teachers' lounge where they could talk to other teachers with the exact same interests. Usually the average number of teachers in the lounge at any one period, for example, would be somewhere between two and three. Just as frequently the lounge was empty. The following field notes reflect these conditions:

37/12/11	2:20 pm	[Lounge] empty--all have gone to class
32/11/20	2:25 pm	no one in lounge
34/12/3	10:30 am	two teachers in lounge plus Special Education Community Trainer
15/11/13	10:40 am	lounge empty--one female teacher came in, used restroom, left
11/11/4	2:14 pm	two teachers came in lounge--chatted as they "sneaked" a cigarette--left for class
	2:20 pm	janitor comes in to fill pop machine--leaves--empty
2/10/30	9:20 am	two teachers enter lounge--settle at table to work on student progress folders--smoking (one is a counselor, <u>not</u> teacher)
10/11/4	2:06 pm	return to lounge--one teacher still there reading a novel--wrote up notes
1/10/30	8:44 am	janitor comes in, buys pop, leaves--empty[4/]

The lounge was a multi-purpose room, e.g., rest, smoke, eat, snack, drink pop, read in peace and quiet, chat informally, work, or some or all of the above. Except

---

[3]These field notes reflect deliberate selections by the investigator from the ebb-and-flow of events in the site. As noted earlier, rarely were conversations or events in the site neat and additive. Topics were dealt with on a hop-scotch fashion. In reconstructing the site, items were pulled from various days and times to provide a "mass" of information which could only be accumulated by participants in several visits to the lounge. As noted earlier, each item is "labeled" by a date and time code. Interviews are also coded.

for lunch periods, nonetheless, it was frequently empty. At CJHS, then, one physical location that could serve as a catchment for teachers in their preparation periods was infrequently used by the few who were not teaching. The lounge at CES was even less used, if for no other reason than CES teachers had no preparation period.

At CES, some 250 students are taught by 18 teachers. Other services are provided by about nine support personnel, including a principal. The teachers at CES do not have a formal preparation period, and because of helping to move students to and from the lunchroom, have at most twenty-five minutes for lunch. These moments at lunch and playground recess are the only times during the day teachers and students aren't together.

The grade combinations at CES are designed to individualize programs of study for students. Placement of students is linked to the overall assessment of student progress in a number of areas, including subject matter skills and emotional development. Table 2 illustrates these combinations of grades and teachers at CES. For example, Table 2 suggests that a grade 1 teacher has seven other teachers who spend time with students on grade 1 materials while a grade 2 teacher has six other colleagues. The overlapping provides a fairly large pool of possible teachers to visit with, but the combinations suggest that each teacher faces a slightly different mix of students. The three teachers of 1-2 face different students not only among themselves but also from the two K-1 teachers and the three 1-2-3 teachers.

Hence, at CJHS and CES the need to provide classes to a large population of students who must meet certain requirements about classes taken and grades successfully completed means that teachers are deliberately separated by schedule. Such schedulings allow courses to be offered at different times during the day at CJHS, and different grade combinations at CES, and limit severely the amount of time teachers can spend together.

Table 2

Teachers by Grades at CES

Grade Combinations	Number of Teachers
K	1
K-1	2
1-2	3
1-2-3	3
3-4	3
4-5-6	3
5-6	3

Subject Matter Preparation. At CJHS, teachers are broken into a dozen different subject areas, e.g., English, Art, and Physical Education. With only one or two exceptions, teachers prepare and present classes in only one subject matter area. Furthermore, most teachers in a specific subject matter areas teach only two different subject specialities, e.g., Geography and U.S. History, French 1 and French 2, or Algebra and 7th Grade Math. In teacher language, most have only two different "preps."

Teachers at CJHS not only distinguish sharp differences among the larger subject matter areas but also see wide differences among courses within the same subject matter area. The field notes and the interviews provide the following information:

1/28/11/14	(181)	..."my English teacher friend"...
14/11/14	approx. 2:10 pm	"I hate going to those LD (learning disabilities) conferences. What do you do when others question your competence and degree? You still know something is wrong..."
17/11/13	approx. 12:10 pm	two teachers were discussing how to deal with unruly students--one suggested "pouring on homework" but the other said that was alright for some areas but he had "no homework to give in Art"...
1/27/11/14	(129-135)	..."elementary teachers...effusive...secondary teachers...period of wa[illegible]..."
34/12/3	approx. 1:15 pm	Mrs. Crown (PE teacher) is drinking a pop--obviously very relaxed--we chat about feeling bad (flu)--as she gets ready to leave for class she comments that this is her "strategy time"--figuring out what to do the next hour--Mr. Comstock (Geography teacher) smiled and shook his head--after she left Mr. Comstock said that he "wished" he taught PE so he could just "toss a ball [illegible]t"

Several points should be noted from the field notes. First, it is not uncommon at CJHS to identify other teachers to strangers by their subject

matter fields. Equally, at CES grade levels are commonly used to identify teachers to others. The subject or grade markers are not idle social ploys. Teachers use such identifications as important ways of understanding and relating to their peers (Swidler, 1979). Only a stranger to education would not "know" differences among English, Industrial Arts, and Special Education teachers. And, within the teaching ranks, only a very foolish English teacher, for example, would challenge the expertise of a learning disabilities teacher (or vice versa). The training of teachers separate them: introductions necessarily point out the uniqueness of trained individuals.

Second, and we shall make more of this later, CJHS and CES teachers distinguished very general techniques of teaching from techniques unique to their particular subject areas or grade levels. While there is some sense of general guidelines for teaching, such sweeping generalities always seem tempered by the unique characteristics of a particular teacher and by the subject matter presented. Teachers may wish to use films, for example, to enrich their classes. But in many subject areas the catalog is limited, while in others it is overwhelming. What is taught interacts with how it is taught, and limits severely larger generalization about teaching.

Finally, CJHS and CES teachers seem to have some conception of their role in a larger educational system. This role includes what they must teach at the various levels of this system, e.g., elementary, junior high school, secondary, college, and graduate school, as well as what expectations about students are appropriate to these levels. The educational system is both illustrated and explained by grade levels and course titles. This system is displayed to others such as parents by pointing to grade levels or subject matter classes. A sixth grade student, who is taught by a sixth grade teacher, should do sixth grade studies, at a level appropriate for a sixth

grade student. The independent factors appear to be grade level and content area. Teachers have been trained and have had experience in teaching both a particular grade level and a particular subject matter. This system provides outsiders as well as other teachers in the system images (stereotypes) of what goes on in classrooms at any grade levels and in any other subject field. These images seem to create a larger, holistic view of an organized educational system sweeping deliberately and dependably from kindergarden to graduate school. At each niche in this system, separate teachers in their classrooms contribute to subject matter understandings at a particular grade level and with certain grade level expectations for students. These expectations are tempered by the age of the students. The system, therefore, is all-encompassing.

Subject matter preparation thus differentiates teachers not only into fields but also seems to be a critical element in understanding the educational system. Teachers at CES and CJHS not only can identify themselves and others but also display the system by indicating subject field and teaching level. These identifiers are particularly useful to teachers because they "locate" other teachers as either possible sources of information or as mere colleagues in the broader field of education. These location markers mean that elementary teachers may find and share with other elementary teachers or that World Geography teachers may discuss issues with other World Geography teachers. The passage of specific information about teaching across grade levels or subject fields, in contrast, seems difficult to CJHS and CES teachers and occurs infrequently in "loose" discussions about schooling or students in general.

Classroom Uniqueness. While CES and CJHS teachers are separated by the organizational scheme of their schools and by their particular preparation

and assignments, the greatest separation come from their belief in the uniqueness of classrooms. Each classroom belongs to a teacher. Rooms are referred to by teacher's names: you are in Mr. Jones' room or in Miss Brown's room (literally). Each teacher's room becomes his or hers. Year after year, Room 219 belongs to Miss Brown and Mr. Jones is in Room 222. The seating arrangement, bulletin boards, pictures, locations of maps or charts, and perhaps even the color of paint are under their control. When students enter, they come into Mr. Jones' or Miss Browns' room. This territoriality is an unshakeable boundary that marks off "her" or "his" from all others. Teachers proudly assert, and are willing to show others that their rooms are different from the rooms of other teachers. The arrangement of chairs, for example, is one indicator of uniqueness.

But even more powerful than rooms are the beliefs held by teachers about their classrooms. The following is a sampler from field notes and interviews:

1/29/11/14	(237)	"I think what I'm doing is right. I'm waiting for an expert to come and show me a better way."
c6/11/20	approx. 10:20 am	some teachers leave their doors open--some shut them
c4/11/20	9:45 am	Teacher correcting boy on way in from recess--"We've got a lot to do. Don't play games."
c1/11/13	1:05 pm	three teachers finishing lunch in lounge--one is upset with a student teacher--another volunteers: "I don't want student teachers...uh...to get between me and the kids."
31/11/18	12:30 pm	"I had that kid last year. He's no All-American boy."
16/11/13	1:47 pm	"Teachers must do as they say."
12/11/14	approx. 2:10 pm	two teachers were discussing a mature fourteen year old girl--Mrs. Wilson called

		her "Lolita"--Mr. Rawls suggested they visit with her other teachers--Mrs. Wilson said she doubted other teachers or counselors understood the girl's problems
1/24/11/14	(392-400)	"Past experiece. All of what I do in class is based on what I've seen work or not work. Past experience...that's ninety percent of it."
c1/11/13	approx. 1:05 pm	"Personally, I believe that..."
Interpretation	c1/11/13	Two teachers plus an aide were discussing the problems of a student--reading, I think. Most of my interest was on conversation on [the] couch about student teacher. As this conversation finished (see c1/11/13 1:05 p.m.) I happened to note these three. They seem to be really discussing the student. Finally, Mrs. Brown said, "Personally, I believe that..." I missed her remedy. But the tone of voice struck me. Mrs. Brown had really said (I think) "That's my student. My background (experience plus training) dictates we do x. I've heard you all but the student is mine." It's the sharpest exchange I've heard. Territoriality. Students as my responsibility.
39/12/16	approx. 12:00 pm	two teachers on couch discussing problem with student--Mr. Cash suggests that the other visits with the principal or counselor about the student--Mrs. Jordan accepts advice about conselor but says of going to principal "that's not my place"--both leave

Teachers see themselves at an existential point in their classrooms. This point, this reality is the intersection of all that has gone on previously in their room (past) and all that they anticipate and hope will happen (future) with a particular student or class. This unique and existential point separates one teacher from another teacher. Several important aspects of uniqueness as illustrated in field notes and interviews deserve discussion.

First, teachers see themselves as the ultimate judges of what happens at this point in their rooms. This judgment is total and absolute. Teachers at CES and CJHS set the rules, for example, for their rooms about student

conduct, learning and assessment. Teachers set the conditions of the classroom as an environment. However, teachers do not see themselves as the sole initiators of what happens in their rooms. The best laid teacher plans may be disrupted by an unruly student or some mysterious outbreak of adolescent stupidity or wit. Equally, a dull and drab day may explode into intellectual excitement as the class "catches fire." But teachers clearly "intend" to control the conditions of their rooms.

Second, classroom conditions in turn put limits on teacher behaviors. Teachers at CES and CJHS are generally expected to practice what they preach. The rules teachers impose on students about punctuality, for example, ought not be broken by the teacher. Such a breakdown opens up opportunities for disruptions, petty problems or annoyances. It helps to practice what you preach--if you are a teacher.

Third, the judgments that a teacher makes about a particular student in their class may be challenged--just so long as the challenge does not extend to the larger, general context of the teacher's classroom. Teachers know students respond differently, but such differences should not change classrooms. Most teachers at CJHS and CES see themselves as suited to work in their rooms with students generally (although they probably work better with particular types of students), as insightful about certain types of problems, and as warranted in these assessment of their own capabilites by their past experiences. Other teachers may challenge views on a particular student, but challenges to the larger frame of reference are neither welcome nor frequent. While another teacher may use a different technique with a specific student, and different techniques may be rigorously examined, discussions about an entire classroom and its complexity must be offered as advice only. Claims to the uniqueness of each teacher's classroom are sacred. Other

teachers offer advice, and in fact advice seems to be given freely at CJHS and CES, but no teacher is obliged to accept such advice. Advice must be weighed against personal (and highly idiosyncratic) classroom experiences.

Finally, just as teachers have their place in the school, counselors, the principal, and others have roles. Teachers seem to anticipate that there will be mutual respect for the various "places" of the school. The uniqueness of their classroom suggests to CJHS and CES teachers, for example, that the principal should control the hallways. Because of such roles, work will get done, griping can be directed to appropriate others, and the overall school can go about its day-to-day routine.

This sense of place was also reflected in the little amount of time teachers spent in talking about administrators in the CJHS lounge. Most of the time teachers talked as if administrators were not a part of the school. The reason for this was clear--teachers were speaking about their classrooms or their subjects or their students. Administrators were mentioned when larger, more global school issues were discussed. For example,

34/12/3 approx 12:10 pm--finished lunch with Mr. Corner, Ass't. Principal--Mr. Sandman, math teacher, came in and broke into our conversation

Mr. Sandman worried about placement of students in Algebra--Mr. Corner said he had talked to other teachers--aware of problem

Mr. Sandman suggested making math open to all had created problem--have to take care of next year--but for now, he suggested switching "bad" Algebra students to ninth grade math

Mr. Corner agreed--"no kids hurt"--show on transcripts that students took ninth grade math--give math grade only--that way they could take Algebra later "if they wish"

Mr. Sandman agrees--quickly leaves to get back to class...

Administrators make decisions which influence equally all classes: teachers make decisions which influence their classes. Each has their place in the

system. When disputes arise, administrators retain global responsibility and teachers retain classroom power. But such discussions were rare, exotic occurrences in the CJHS teachers lounge. Usually, administrators existed neither in flesh nor in spirit in the lounge.

In sum, while the second section of this report will elaborate both the themes of training and classroom uniqueness--they are important elements in faculty lounge talk--little will be heard of organizational arrangements until the final section of the report. Stated differently, teachers at CES and CJHS spent little time worrying about larger organizational arrangements which separated (segregated) them from other teachers. They seemed to see these as perfectly natural (as parts of the educational system). Teachers at different levels and in different subject areas are different, and such differences mean they are unique. Equally, teachers at CJHS and CES freely swap advice about teaching techniques, about students and about tricks of the trade. But these exchanges are <u>never</u> obligatory--any teacher may reject out-of-hand the suggestions of a colleague by suggesting that "Personally, I believe that...". The arbiter of such suggestions is <u>the</u> experience of the individual CES or CJHS teacher in <u>their</u> classrooms, and this decision rule is sacred. Such power rests not only on the specific and particular happenings in their rooms but also on their specific mission to teach students in a certain grade a particular subject matter. Few others in CES or CJHS had this specific charge, and those significant others were hard to see on a daily basis.

The Faculty Lounge and Teacher Talk

This section deals almost exclusively with the faculty lounge at CJHS and with what may be called "teacher talk," the way teachers talk about classrooms and their life as teachers. Deliberately ignored will be talk about weather, health, husbands or wives or lovers, and vacations--the kind of everyday amenities and discussions that occur among good friends, acquaintances and colleagues, and which made up a good portion of conversations in the lounge.

Teacher talk will be analytically divided into two major categories: classroom realities and teacherhood problems. Classroom realities, in turn, will be analyzed as four major topics: ambiguity of control; particular students; nature of the age group of students; and, necessity of teaching subjects. Teacherhood problems also includes four principal subdivisions: teacher rewards; effects of teaching on self; public images of teachers; and, failure of others, e.g., parents, society. (See Figure 2). In the next few pages these major analytic categories and their sub-categories will be examined in detail.

Classroom Realities. Teacher talk in the CJHS lounge often dealt with certain realities to be found in classrooms. Such discussions ranged over four major areas: ambiguity of control; particular students; nature of the age group of students; and, necessity of teaching subjects.

1. Ambiguity of control. Teachers spend a fair amount of time in the CJHS lounge talking about controlling classrooms. These discussions rarely deal with the remote possibility that entire classrooms are out of control. Most frequently talk centers on means available to teachers to control lesser situations, recognizing that students have powerful disruptive weapons available. The field notes suggest the flavor of some of these discussions.

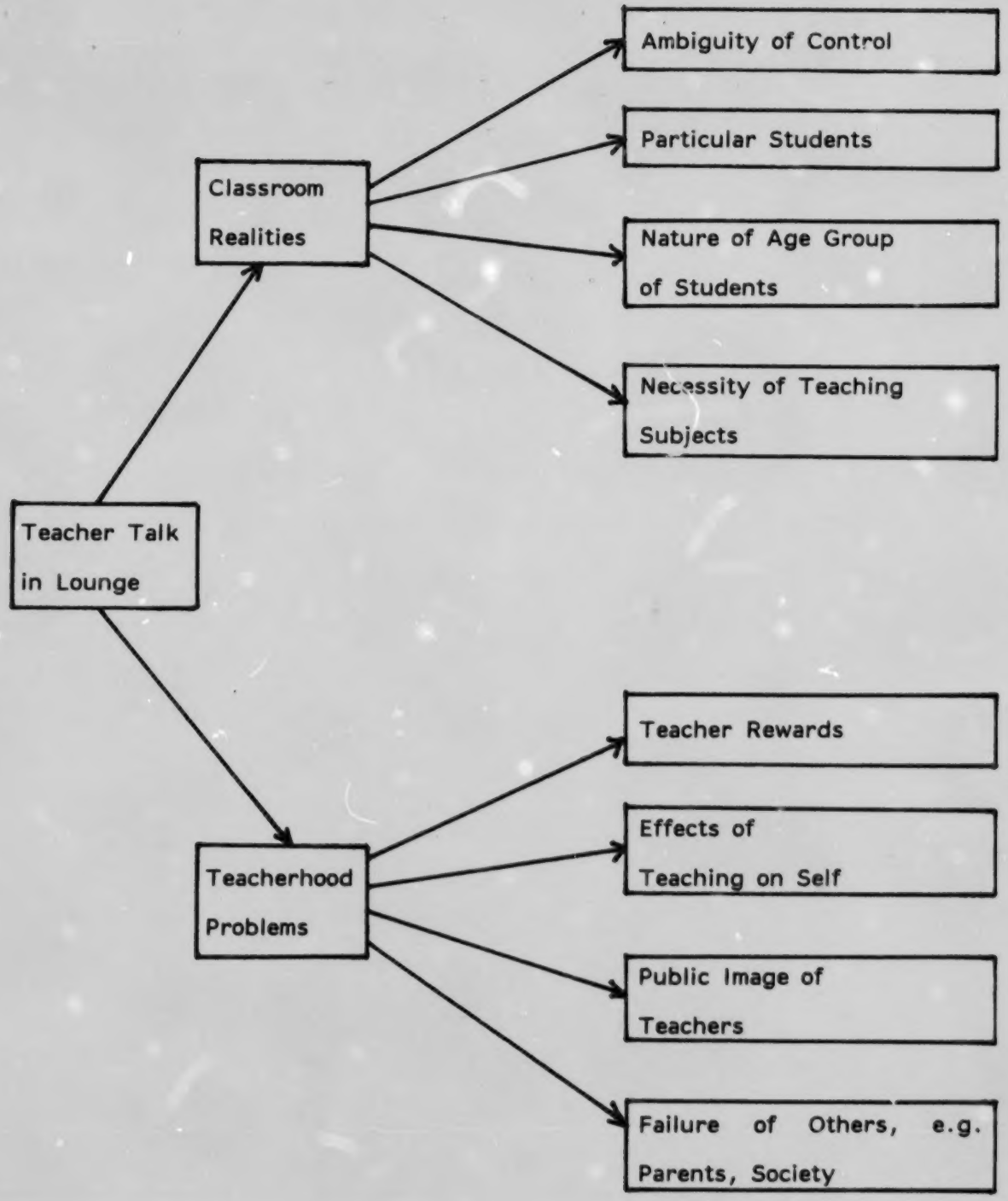

Figure 2. Topics of lounge conversation ("teacher talk").

c5/11/20	approx. 1:05 pm	Miss Kelly "I haven't been doing that..." [PAUSE] Mrs. Jones "It's a good way of handling kids on a day like today..."
12/11/4	approx. 2:07 pm	Mr. Gordon (Geography) was telling another that he had just "nailed an LD (learning disabilities) student to the floor" about parental help--the student didn't tell the truth about whether or not his parents would help him--
13/11/4	approx. 2:20 pm	"7th graders are tactless"
37/12/11	1:37 pm	three female teachers (English, Art and Physical Education) were discussing the possible double meaning--sex--of a story title--English teacher mentioned that some 9th grade boys had played a game with her about the title--an obviously naive student hadn't picked up on the connotation, and those boys had pressed her about it--they were "putting her on to see how she would react"
38/12/11	2:27 pm	Mrs. Worth, counselor, remarked about the numerous number of thefts--felt was caused by "anonymity" in such a large school

Several points about ambiguity of control need to be emphasized. First, teachers at CJHS are sensitive to the abilities of students as individuals and as groups to resist efforts at teacher control. In general, teachers talk about this general capacity on the part of all students to resist as if it were a game. For example, teachers expect students to "embarrass," to be "tactless" or to "conveniently lie." In this way, teachers come to expect students to exhibit certain normally rebellious traits. These normally rebellious outbreaks are dealt with initially as a game to be played between teacher and student or among a teacher and a small group of students. These are minor scuffles, anticipated as spirited young people seek to explore the boundaries of teacher control.

Second, teachers seem confident that they possess skills enough to control their classrooms under most of these gaming conditions. Control means playing it cool, losing neither one's anger nor self-confidence. Displays of coolness "tell" the class that teachers are experienced players. Good teachers not only know a game is being played but also display that they can play the game better than students. If the students push, the CJHS teacher will play even harder--although pushing eventually may lead to behaviors beyond the game. "Good" kids know when to quit, just as "good" teachers know how to feign anger.

Third, teachers know they must punish students, but recognize there are boundaries for punishing overt displays which fall outside the realm of normal gamesmanship. They can "nail" students by revealing that they know the student is lying, for example. But the punishment should be just: it should "fit" the crime. Usual gamesmanship between teacher and student thus means restraint, particularly by the "adult" teacher.

Fourth, gamesmanship within classrooms is enhanced by teachers knowledge of the general characteristics of individuals and class groups, as well as knowledge of particular students or groups. By swapping information about a particular student or group of students, teachers alert each other to ways they have played the game successfully or unsuccessfully. They single out, for instance, students who are especially adept or maladroit at playing the game. Some students are mischievious; others disruptive. Teachers may also indulge in telling stories about successful or unsuccessful games at other times (and in other places). These incidents of swapping and sharing create a sense of the commonness of gaming with students, and spread information about good or bad moves and about the other "team" of players. Familiarity brings clear understandings of safe and unsafe moves within classroom games.

But in the hallways and other non-classroom sites of CJHS unfamiliarity produces less tractable situations. In classrooms teachers know who students are, how they play the game, and teachers can reveal how they play their game. In hallways, in contrast, the failure to know each others moves makes gaming dicey. Teachers can only anticipate average ("mathematical mean") responses from students; students face these same problems. The anonymity of the hallway and of other non-classroom sites disrupts the normal game, and thus may lead to serious problems. Teachers often avoid such encounters by spending little time in hallways. Finally, and this leads to our next topic, some students seem to resist all conventional efforts at teacher control.

2. Particular students. Some students stand apart from the general run of students. The field notes and interviews illuminate some of these "different" students at CJHS.

13/11/14	approx 2:20 pm	"A physically mature 8th grade girl can be a danger to a 29 year old male..."
1/22/11/14	(237)	"problem kids with great potential... I build them up... I think they're great... I help their self-concept... build up...
12/11/4	approx 1:50 pm	Teacher--"He's just dumb."
31/11/18	12:30 pm	"I had that kid last year..."
13/11/4	approx. 2:40 pm	two teachers discussing "a potentially violent student"--Mrs. Kelly pointed out that she "got to him" by using him as a helper to clean up her room--a "helping role"--Mr. Rounds remarked that "He still has strange eyes."
1/26/11/14	(062)	"I get all this enrichment [from discussions by students of their family travels]."

Characteristics such as maturity, abilities or problems--or a marked lack of maturity, abilities or problems--set some students apart. Teachers at CJHS worry about these particular students for several reasons. First,

particular students pose day-to-day problems in their classrooms. A sexually promiscuous girl, a seemingly out-of-control boy, a student lacking intellectual capacities or a student who has richer experiences than the teacher endangers the rules of the classroom game. Such deviant students seem to demand much more teacher time and energy to control, and may be ultimately uncontrollable. They are ticking bombs, often exploding without apparent reason.

Second, particular students pose problems for the entire school. They are constant sources of trouble, requiring constant surveillance. But even surveillance is troublesome. While teachers alert each other, or inquire about, particular students, they may differ in their assessments both of cause and of consequence. Teachers will have spotted such students, but may provide differing interpretations of such students behaviors. Hence, the "cures" for particular students may create divisions among the faculty. Answers to questions of what can be done, of who should do it, and of possible incidents between teachers and parents, for example, often create disagreements.

Finally, particular students challenge most teachers' general confidence in their ability to prepare their charges for the future. The particular student may get pregnant or be sent off to jail or be sent to a private prep school. Particular students, then, stand apart from the usual criteria of success or failure teacher apply to students at CJHS. Being different, particular create problems not only teachers and classrooms but also the entire school.

3. Nature of the age group of students. Teachers also talk a good deal about students in general. Teachers of 7th, 8th and 9th grade boys and girls find these years of development fascinating. One interpretation may suffice.

Interpretation 15/11/13

Potential listing of categories teachers use to "describe" students
- sex--male or female
- physical maturity
- social maturity
- learning abilities
  - attentive vs non-attentive
- energy level
- truth-teller vs li[illegible]
- good vs mischievous vs bad
- attentive vs inattentive ("goof-off")
- observable behavior vs motives
- self-centered vs group (sensitive?)
- follows rules vs fools the system
- ignorant of life vs sophisticated about life
- strengths vs weaknesses
- great potential vs average vs low potential
- learning capacities
- involved
- floating vs trying
- putting forth an effort

Teacher talk is filled with efforts to put students into categories or to create categories to capture students. Some obvious, e.g., sex, and some subtle, e.g., energy level.

The typical teacher at CJHS spends 300 minutes each day formally instructing with some 170 students. It is small wonder that teachers spend so much time talking about the general characteristics of those who confront them. This fascination with student characteristics in general is not only pragmatic for daily survival but also necessary for evaluation by teachers of their success. Pragmatically, teachers need to know as much as they can to survive. They need to have as subtle a category scheme as is possible about the creatures surrounding them. While teachers are the subject matter experts, are adults and are in their rooms, students are the overwhelming majority. Teachers could be easily overrun by teenage hordes.

Teachers also wish to separate what they are achieving from other forces influencing student development. Teacher talk is concerned about and sensitive to claims of efficacy. This sensitivity is displayed by the ability of

teachers not only to challenge (gently) the capacities of their colleagues to shape students by providing alternative explanations for student behavior but also by the general sense of social complexity teacher categories suggest. Why did student X do behavior Y? Teachers know that Y could be produced not only by teacher behaviors but also by budding sexual maturity, by energy level or by other combinations of factors. Efforts by teacher to suggest single category explanations for CJHS student actions always seem susceptible to challenge as colleagues offer other interpretations. Often teachers express simple mystification about the complexity of student behavior--sometimes wonderful things just happen.

The concern of teachers about students as a generalized category seems one constant of teacher classroom realities at CJHS. It is a continuous source of speculation and wonder, and seemingly an ever present topic of teacher talk. In fact, students often appear as constant sources of amazement to teachers. The continuities and discrontinuities over time, the victories and the defeats, and the "good" and "bad" situations of students are the fuel of most teacher talk. If you don't like talking about students, don't come to the lounge.

4. Necessity of teaching subjects. Teachers at CJHS spent some time talking about the subject matter they taught. Again, this section begins by noting some interpretations, field notes, and interviews which bear on this topic.

Interpretation	14/11/10	Teachers seem mostly to talk about their subjects. They don't spend time discussing in detail a particular lesson but they do visit about the need for Geography or English.
1/10/11/4	approx. 1:52 pm	"My [general] approach is to build on the strengths and weaknesses of the student population. I move from concepts to skills or competencies."

37/12/11	1:37 pm	three female teachers--Mrs. Jones, Smith and Thomas (English) in lounge--lunch--Mrs. Jones smoking--borrows cigarette--Mrs. Thomas involve me in discussion of good restaurant --Mrs. Thomas shares a piece of cookie with me--Mrs. Smith breaks in to our chat and asks other two about how kids are doing in the text--a general discussion of reading levels on text--Mrs. Jones points out that students like to do some exercises (code of initials I can't follow)--seems to be clear hierarchy of materials--great concern expressed by Mrs. Smith over inference steps--assessment of how hard or easy it is for kids to understand questions in text--Mrs. Thomas remarks she "doesn't always see how text questions are developed or their logic"...
35/12/3	approx. 12:10 pm	standing in hall with Asst. Principal, Mr. Corner--some Spec. Ed. kids being wheeled or guided back from lunch--Jean says "Hi" to both of us but George called Mr. Corner "wrong" name--Spec. Ed. teacher smiled and shrugged shoulders--on way to cafeteria Mr. Corner explained he also had George in the one class he taught
1/19/11/14		"This is the core text. That's what I call this [book]."

Teachers at CJHS talked as if they were involved in teaching students certain subject matters. Several points should be noted briefly. First, teachers formulated a general approach to this cognitive task, frequently using a single text book as the core of their approach. Second, while they did use a single book, they frequently augmented the text with other materials. Third, teachers at CJHS worried about what they were teaching in so far as that content can be grasped by students. Some talk about the text with other teachers; all seem to use tests or other indicators to see how well students comprehend materials. Finally, teachers rarely seemed to engage in the discussion of the relative merits of various subject areas. They seem to accept the need to teach courses, for reasons such as some student might

need it to get into the University, or students needed to know this for next years work (Swidler, 1979).

Subject matter concerns appeared to join teachers as part of an educational system. Texts, supplementary materials, tests and assignments were commonplaces for locating what was happening in CJHS classrooms. To teach was to teach a subject field to students at a certain level. The failure of the teacher to teach or of the student to learn endangered some higher levels of the system.

Summary: Classroom realities. Teacher talk at CJHS recognized four major realities about classrooms. Classrooms are peopled with two general categories of students; the majority who reflect the general characteristics of early adolescences, and a few particular students who possess unique characteristics. Classrooms are sites wherein students must be taught a subject matter, frequently found in a core text. Finally, the nature of students and the requirements of subject matter learning produce a problematic situation. Students may overtly or covertly challenge the classroom situation the teacher seeks to establish. Teachers and students through gamelike encounters jointly develop definitions of the classroom situation. These definitions at CJHS suggest that teachers challenge adolescents to behave as students while adolescents behaving as students challenge adults to remain as teachers. Overt challenges must be met and overcome if teachers are to remain in control. And generally these challenges are overcome. Most students are controlled to a sufficient degree to keep the class moving in the direction desired by the teacher.

The general character of teacher lounge talk about classroom realities suggests one important point. While each teacher is separate from nearly every other teacher in the building, teachers may use the lounge as a place

to talk about the similarities or differences which may exist among them. While teachers are separated from each other by the organizational schedule, by their subject matter preparation, and by the universal recognition that each classroom is unique, they may be integrated by discussions in the lounge of classroom realities. Realities about students and classroom control thus provide grounds for commonality. This commonality is best seen as understandings that CJHS teachers displayed to colleagues about the existence of and the need to resolve (at least temporarily) problems such as particular students. CJHS teachers come to understand from conversations in the lounge that all other teachers in the building face particular children and the need to "handle" them in the classroom. CJHS teachers also learn in the lounge that each teacher may face different particular children, e.g., a sexually developed fourteen year old female threatens male teachers but not female teachers, and may "handle" them in different ways, e.g., one teacher may make one a helper, a second may watch one very carefully. The details of the nature of particular students and of strategies for dealing with them are legitimate topics for swapping. Detailed accounts become sources of information and of possible courses of action. Tales told in the lounge thus become ways of joining teachers with other teachers. Hence, teachers learn in the lounge to see themselves comfortably as different from but similar to their colleagues in facing classroom realities. As the next section chronicles, the problems of teacherhood seem to afford them further opportunities both for uniqueness and for identification.

Teacherhood Problems. The second major topic of teacher lounge talk at CJHS was the problems of being a teacher. These conversations did not dwell on what was happening in the classroom, but with larger issues connected with teaching generally, the school and the society. Teacher talk on

these issues can be classified into four categories: teacher rewards; effects of teaching on self; public images of teachers; and, failure of others.

Teacher rewards. Teachers find a great deal of joy as well as some intense sadness in their role. Turning again to field notes, the following are good examples of teacher rewards:

I/4/10/30		"While a new Special Education might seem overwhelmed [by the team meeting], they get into it pretty fast. Pretty soon they're popping with ideas."
11/11/4	approx. 2:30 pm	Mr. Dunn (Health) teacher is putting up poster on lounge bulletin board about no smoking day--Mr. Clover is teasing about him smoking--Mr. Dunn says he's a weakling, but hopes "at least one kid" stops smoking
I/29/11/14	(232)	"I choose what I teach. I'ts a nice job. I do worry that I may be my own worst boss."
35/12/3	approx. 12:35 pm	--eating lunch--Mrs. Holden (librarian) comes in and gets pop--I'm introduced--she turns to Mr. Jones (girl's cross-country coach) and mentions a girl who comes into library and reads the running magazine--as Mrs. Holden leaves Jones promises to get in touch with girl during PE class

It should not be surprising that in so human an enterprise as teaching rewards such as joy and sadness are linked to the nurturence or the loss of human talents. Several points seems pertinent to this line of reasoning. First, teachers work in an environment with other teachers that provides constant opportunities for feedback about success or failure. These claims may be discounted to a certain extent as idiosyncratic, but no teacher can doubt completely that something good or something bad has happened--particularly when it rings so true to your own classroom experiences. The sharing of winning or losing, then, is a community-building experience. The joy that one teacher shows is contagious, making possible renewed efforts on the

part of others. Moments of sadness also create a "we" feeling, and may contribute further to pride in being a teacher--we "try" very hard. Teachers talk freely and often of their successes and failures with CJHS students. While they are saddened by failure, and while it seems to goad some to greater efforts, most accept a few failures as an inevitable concomitant to many successes. The problem of teacher joy is the inescapeable corollary of teacher sadness.

Second, teachers individually may adapt their classroom priorites to heighten their own joy or sadness. They may raise or lower expectations for students social or intellectual performances, make of the athletic program what they wish to a great degree, and define the target population for a program as a single student, a single class, or the entire school. But these adaptations are not wild or erratic. In fact, as discussions in the lounge suggest, these are in reality fine-tunings. They are efforts to fit within the general framework of joys and sadness particular events in particular classrooms for particular teachers. They are adjustments.

Third, CJHS teachers see themselves as part of a generally good group of people doing an important job. They may or may not quibble about their status as professional, but few who remain in teaching find it a "bad" job. This sense of comradeship not only heightens the human dimensions of joys and sadness but also tempers the range of individual assessments. Over time teachers come to know what to expect in terms of rewards or losses. Veterans may sound unduly cynical to beginners or outsiders; they seem to have grasp some rule of "minimum expectations." Equally, the "oddest" of teachers regress toward the mean over time in their assessments of the quality of their teaching. The discussions in the lounge help create common understandings and shared respect as they overcome the separateness of the teacher and

the realities of the classroom. The talk in the lounge creates common, not just subjective, assessments. Most CJHS teachers in the lounge talk "as if" they were the sole judge of their teaching success or failure; their assessments of their work, nonetheless, are tempered by discussions in the lounge.

Effects of teaching on self. Teachers have clear notions of some of the effects that being a teacher has on them as persons.

16/11/13	approx. 11:34 pm	lunch--Mrs. Gregg and Mrs. Fox are discussing student problem as Mr. Gordon joins them with his lunch tray--Mrs. Gregg uses the word "exacerbate"--Mr. Gordon says "Exacerbate! Don't talk that way. I now have a junior high vocabulary."--suggests he doesn't understand such big words--Mrs. Fox already setting at table then told joke about her aunt who taught first grade for 52 years--"Uncle Harry, get into bed. Now take off your shorts. Now touch me..." (laughter by entire table)
1/30/11/14	(261)	"I've spent too many years in the junior high school."
31/11/18	approx. 12:30 pm	lunch--Mr. Elliott (Geography)--"how elementary teachers talk"--simplified like first grade reader imitation
37/12/11	2:19 pm	Mrs. Kane (English)--"The elementary teacher speaks in monosyllables and in short sentences." (imitates--general laughter)
1/26/11/14	(104-113)	"I love working with these kids. They have so much energy...they're fun. I like to see them get involved."
16/11/13	11:34 pm	Mr. Salter (Industrial Arts)--at lunch--asked me if I would be interested in helping him write article on curriculum--I begged off--he left (may have hurt his feelings)
15/11/13	10:57 pm	in lounge with two teachers--Mr. Callahan had taken a class with me--he is kidding me about being a prof--he has finished program--Mr. French asks if I know Prof. Z--no--he tells me "horror" story about Z's class (no goals, etc.)

Teachers in the CJHS lounge believed that working at a certain level in schools profoundly influenced their behaviors. The effect of being an elementary teacher on conversation and behavior was a common "joke" among these junior high school teachers. (See Haller, 1966.) They were just as sensitive to the impact of their own work and environment on their behaviors. They may well have anticipated that high school teachers or university professors made them the butt of lounge jokes. They felt comfortable chatting with their peers about what junior high school teaching did to them as people.

In a clear sense teachers at CJHS felt that being with students kept them young and vital, but also threatened to make them less than fully adult. Students were not only a continuous source of wonder and joy but also required that adults "retard" themselves to be fully understood. Moving too quickly for students or judging students on too mature a scale meant that teachers would be frustrated. Keeping in touch with students meant for CJHS teachers not only vitality but also slowing down. Teachers thus found what teaching did to them as problematic.

But they did not find problematic that they were to teach subjects and students in a junior high school manner. They were neither elementary nor high school teachers. They had to adjust the intellectual content and pacing of intellectual challenge to the capacities of the students of this age group. These adjustments, made successfully, insured student achievement, teacher rewards and a simpler vocabulary and a less complex world for the individual teachers. The tradeoff seemed clear.

Public images of teachers. Conversations in the CJHS lounge also pointed up the love-hate relationship teachers have with the public. On the one hand, CJHS teachers felt that many people saw them as critical elements in the development of the young. On the other, most worried about the

willingness of the public to support and to pay for needed services. The notes and interviews provide a taste of this problem.

1/25/11/14	(036)	"I can't get away from my job. Maybe teachers can't do that. I know some parents expect us to be always working."
38/12/11	2:27 pm	Mrs. Kane (counselor) is talking about how the school now is a pulse of the entire community--
31/11/18	approx. 1:00 pm	two male teachers discussing salary of teachers--Mr. Elliott singles out a friend working on county roads makes more money, has better vacation--Mr. Swink remarks that "They [public] don't think we work year round."

The importance of teaching for the maintenance of our way of life, and the unwillingness of the public to support and to pay teachers their just wages were everpresent themes in the lounge at CJHS. The public expects teachers to be constantly on the job as they help the young become good American citizens. There was little disagreement among those in the lounge of the legitimacy of this public charge. Equally, those in the CJHS lounge felt abused (and some felt badly abused) by critical and unappreciative parents and by the salaries they received for fulfilling this imperative mission. The summer "vacation," for example, was a continuous concern to teachers because the public could not see its importance.

Few solutions to public misunderstandings were presented. Most CJHS teachers simply felt that this was the way things were. Good teachers would be lost because of parental pressure and of low pay, and schools would be less than they could be (and certainly much less than they ought to be) because of the public's general unwillingness to generate more support and revenue for schools.

Failure of others. The general relationship between the school and its environment had another dimension. While CJHS teachers often saw those

outside the school, and parents particularly, as helpful, more frequently teachers saw failure in the environment. The field notes and interviews again provide some sense of this concern.

1/25/11/14		"Well, this one set of parents didn't want their son in reading. They didn't see it as challenging him. I think they thought it was remedial. I set them straight in a hurry. Teachers aren't always nice."
1/3/10/30		"Consistency is good for kids. We try to be consistent and to let their parents know what we're doing."
12/11/4	approx. 2:45 pm	Mr. Johnson (English) discussing conflict with parents of a mainstreamed student--student described as "out-of-synch" with class--"laughs 45 seconds after joke"--parents know problem but don't care--dumping
15/11/13	10:33 am	two teachers and janitor having pop, smoking in lounge--discussing "trashing" of grounds over weekend--janitor says people in neighborhood should watch school--teachers agree
18/11/14	9:57 am	lengthy discussion betweem two teachers on one parent family--both violently suggested it as major problem (emotional!)

For the CJHS teachers, those outside the school frequently failed to carry their fair share in raising the young. First, many CJHS teachers were deeply concerned about the responsibilities of the family. They saw parents, and particularly single parent families, dumping their children on schools. And those who dumped them demanded the schools provide for children things that parents would not provide. Second, many CJHS teachers saw parents as wrong--often extremely out of touch--in their assessment of student capabilities. Parents demanded that teachers perform what CJHS teachers often saw as "miracles." Third, CJHS teachers (and janitors) felt the distance between the school and the community was growing. Those who sat in the lounge knew all too well grim tales of cost-cutting, school closing and tax-revolt.

Finally, CJHS teachers seemed worried about American society writ large. They seemed worried about the loss of consistency about important values and institutions. At times discussions were bleak. Despite this doom and gloom, however, teachers could point to instances of cooperation and success. But more frequently they pointed to how the failures of others, particularly parents, created major problems for teachers.

The most dramatic discussion witnessed by this investigator in all the CJHS lounge observations centered on how the failure of others created problems for teachers about student discipline. The extended field notes follow:

39/12/16 approx. 12:40 pm finished eating lunch in lounge--chatting with two male counselors,Wilson and Young --they were discussing problems they were having with a "problem" student

Mr. Wilson tells how four years ago he had moved his family and kids to Commuter Village--kids had to adjust to strict rules and tough grading--one had very successfully ("A's and B's"), one having some troubles

Art teacher, Mr. Brown, enters--borrows change for pop machine--sits at other table

other counselor, Mr. Young, stresses what good discipline--"paddling"--does for kids and schools --they know we mean business

another teacher enters--Mrs. Able (I don't know her well--English teacher, I think)

Mr Young continues about paddling--had paddled in city schools until sup't. came in--can't remember name--supplied by Mr. Wilson

Mr. Young continued describing virtues of paddling--now "we have to beg to get their [students] attention"--[imitates pleading gestures]

Mr. Wilson asks Mr. Brown if he ever paddled--"No."

> Mr. Young continues to push value of paddling--issue of parents--"I don't want mine paddled."--shook head (disgust)
>
> Mrs. Able suggest she don't want her kids to be paddled
>
> Mr. Wilson says O.K. to paddle his--remembers when if he got paddled in school, also got paddled at home--claims parents are the problem now
>
> Mr. Young: "Society."
>
> Mr. Brown and Mrs. Able protest that they don't like paddling
>
> counselors both leave (had been moving toward door anyway--dump lunch garbage in can)--both going to class
>
> Mr. Brown and Mrs. Able continue pointing out evils of paddling--might hurt kids physically--Mrs. Able continued to shake head negatively--"I don't want them paddling my kid....hurt...don't know how hard to hit."

Perhaps the counselor's single word sentence, "Society.", sums up as succinctly as is possible his view of the teacherhood problem of the failure of others. But the sharp division between these two sets of teachers also suggests that disagreements among teachers about the nature of society and of larger problems are common.

Summary: Teacherhood problems. The problems of teacherhood generally pull teachers together. These problems provide common concerns for teachers at CJHS as they talk about how their colleagues and school, or schools in general, are treated by the surrounding environment. They also worry together about the balance of joys and sadness in teaching and about the costs and benefits of being a teacher.

These generalized concerns forge a strong bond with classroom realities, and help create a teacher perspective. The perspective created by classroom

realities and teacherhood problems seems to contain three major elements: first, each and every CJHS teacher feel they provide unique solutions to nearly all classroom realities, and to some teacherhood problems. In this sense teachers are isolated and lonely, and stand apart from all other teachers. The second element in the perspective is the conditions of commonality created by nearly all teacherhood problems and some of the classroom realities. Common themes and problems arise--even if colored slightly differently by the particular subject, the particular students, and the particular teacher. There are differences, but teacher talk in the lounge reveals many similarities. Finally, the third element in the perspective is the sense of the general educational system. This sense of the general system not only differentiates elementary and junior high teachers but also suggests what is appropriate for these, and other, levels. Teachers at CJHS have senses of what constitutes "education" from kindergarden through at least a bachelor's or master's degree. This schema of the general educational system sets forth what students should know and how students should behave when they enter a particular teacher's classroom, what should happen during the student's stay in this room, and what they should know and how they should behave when they leave that classroom. (See Figure 3.)

Hence, teachers at CJHS find commonality in the general educational system they believe they are a part of, while they find uniqueness in the particular realities of classrooms. The problems of teacherhood are in middle standing like a signpost pointing particular realities toward larger universals and universals toward the existential moments of the classroom.

Yet, one warning needs to be raised, and seriously heeded. Fernandez (1965), among others, has pointed out that cultural groups such as teachers frequently avoid exploring in depth issues for fear of creating conflict.

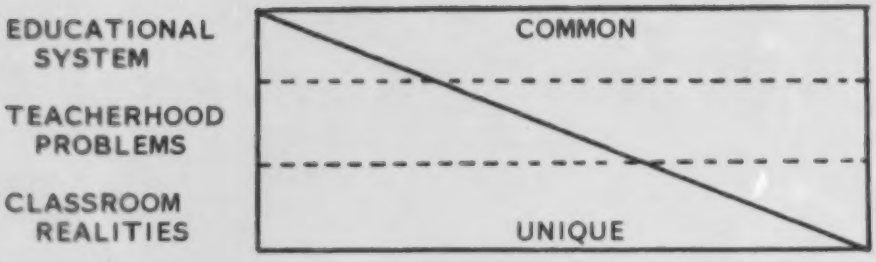

Figure 3. Common and unique elements in perspective.

Social interaction is facilitated by stressing common experiences and by downplaying precisions which might expose deep differences. Fixing attention on that which seems commonplace accentuates the solidarity of groups, and covers over possible divisive uniqueness. Higher level abstractions may hide lower level disagreements.

While the lounge at CJHS may not seem to be a place designed exactly for such abstract discussions, it serves as an arena to allow teachers who wish to display their individuality, as a forum to create comradeship with fellow teachers, and as a platform to affirm their faith in an holistic education system which they serve and perpetuate. That teachers are not as unique as they claim, that the fellowship is not as warm as they profess, and that the system is not as coherent or as unified as they believe are unfounded assertions of cynics or outsiders unfit to eat their lunch, to drink their pop or to smoke their cigarettes in the CJHS lounge.

Social Settings, Deliberate Segregation and Change

This final section pulls together the themes developed in the first two sections and joins them with a discussion of change in schools. The intent of such an effort is to examine what may help or hinder those who seek to introduce change in schools. To conduct such an examination in an orderly fashion, four questions will be posed. They are:

1) What impact does teacher separateness have on change in classrooms?

2) What impact does teacher separateness and classroom realities have on change in classrooms?

3) What impact does teacher separateness, classroom realities, and teacherhood problems have on change in schools?

4) What impact does teacher separateness, classroom realities, teacherhood problems and a sense of the educational system have on change in education?

Teacher Separateness and Classroom Change. Teacher separateness suggests that schools are fragmented organizations. Teachers at CJHS and CES are organizationally separated from co-workers, see their teaching areas as distinctive, and believe that most decisions made in their classrooms are unique. Changes introduced at these schools must deal with, if not overcome, these three conditions of teacher separateness.

The deliberately fragmented organizational arrangements of CJHS and CES reflect what is now a tradition in American education--the confrontation daily for a specified time period of a trained adult and untrained children. As they mature, children are confronted by more and variously trained adults, and are required to move from site to site to meet with these adults. American schools are collections of such sites.

The allocation of children to sites is not random. Each site and its trained adult provide some necessary but unique information to children.

Schedules are important to adults and children because they dictate the amount of time and the place of these meetings.

Framed in this manner, teacher separateness begins with a larger managerial decision that children can be trained most effectively and most efficiently by specially trained adults teaching them subject matter for specified time periods each day. This decision for fragmentation mean that both the organizational arrangements of the schools and the preparation of teachers are relatively inflexible. Schools must be arranged so that classes may take place, and teachers must be trained to "conduct" classes. In this sense, then, we ought to speak of the structuring of schools as places of "deliberate segregation." This fragmentation is now the structural tradition of the school. Further, children should be treated as fundamentally isolated from other children--each child possesses nearly infinite capacities for adjusting to new groupings of peers of their own age--and teachers should be treated as highly knowledgeable about a limited range of children and a small part of the intellectual world--each teacher possesses nearly infinite capacities for knowing about a relatively small sector of human life and knowledge.

These principles of organization or teacher preparation do not fit all students or all teachers. Each classroom site becomes a place where students seek particularism, for example, by seeking friends, ignoring many peers, and disliking others. Classrooms also are affected by how well each teacher knows and is able to communicate the subject matter. The stress by students and teacher on uniqueness, on the particularism of each site, would seem to increase as more universalistic standards of random student assignment and the more specialized knowledge of a teacher increases. These universalistic pressures often serve to accentuate the particularistic nature of a group of students and a teacher confronting each other about a specific subject during a time.

But it would be an error to accentuate too greatly individualism. Consider for just a moment the multiple sources of information available to teachers about what a teacher "ought to do" in a particular classroom. They include, for example, the experiences of

1. the individual who is now a teacher but who has been a student confronting teachers for at least sixteen years of formal schooling
2. parents
3. brothers and sisters
4. other relatives such as nieces and nephews, uncles and aunts, and grandparents
5. fellow students of different ages and sexes, abilities and interests during the sixteen years or more of formal schooling
6. peers in teacher training courses
7. professors in teaching training courses
8. the cooperating teacher in student teaching
9. peers during student teaching classes
10. companions or spouses
11. administrators of the school where the individual is teaching
12. fellow teachers in the school
13. parents of students
14. students
15. friends and acquaintances
16. teachers as written about in novels or displayed in movies or television
17. the individual as a classroom teacher

Those experiences provide a rich catalog of information about how school systems are organized, how subjects are taught, and how teacher behave.

At CES and CJHS we know teachers in the lounge talk little about change, and we suspect would probably be slightly bothered about the notion of teacher separateness. They might see this notion stressing too much connotations of isolation and loneliness. Instead, teachers see themselves fulfilling an integral part in a well-developed system. This system appears to be sound, and teachers have fairly clear images of what they should be doing. On the other hand, CES and CJHS teachers spend a great deal of time talking with other teachers about teaching. They swap information about students, successful or unsuccessful tricks of the trade, and graduate courses or degrees. This seems to be or represent a core of their commitment to education. This swapping often crosses lines drawn by distant classrooms or different subject fields. Information is freely given: there is no obligation that it will be necessarly used. As CJHS and CES teachers talk shop they fully expect to give, and to receive advice, but they fully expect that others or that they themselves may use any portion of that advice as they see fit. Teachers may totally reject a suggestion or they may totally incorporate what has been offered. It simply may, or may not, work for a particular teacher in a particular classroom at a particular time.

Teachers at CES and CJHS talk as if the larger system is fixed but as if they were constantly tinkering with their classrooms. The need for such minor experimentation arises from the unique mix of students they face in their classes and larger changes which may be happening in their fields of subject matter specialization. CES and CJHS teachers talk as if they were constantly changing--but within limits set by the larger system and by students, subject matter and the particularistic mix of the class they face at this

moment. A change in either the larger system or any of these elements creates major problems. If subject matter changes, for example, the effects produced on students and on the understood particularisms of the classroom must be re-examined. Changes in the mix of students, on the other hand, result in reassessment of subject matter and the conditions of the classroom. Shifts in the larger system may well be traumatic.

Teacher separateness is but one element of the larger system which produces a governor on change in classrooms. As changes are proposed, they are weighed against the system and its key factors. Such a weighing generally induces a strategy of incrementalism. Small, seemingly insignificant shifts are constantly happening. To the participants the particular mix is never quite the same, but the generalized structure of the situation seems eternal--a teacher, some subject matter, a batch of students, and a specified length of time.

Teacher separateness and classroom change also provide some insight on one of the issues of loose-coupling in organizations. It was noted earlier that much of this literature suggests that individuals retroactively make sense of what they just did. Teacher separateness suggests that as actors teachers may not only intend to do something but also can explicate retroactively what they did because the sense of system makes available a larger repertoire of explanations. This systems catalog permits intentions and goal-seeking as well as permitting reflecting and action clarifying. Lounge talk, for instance, can be used to diplay tight linking between intention and outcome. It can also be used to explain why unexpected conditions upset planning. Hence, the larger systemic frame of reference provides major categories justifying teacher separateness and suggesting that it is "just the way things are" in schools.

Classroom Realities and Classroom Change. Classroom realities, as talked about in CJHS lounge, suggest teachers may successfully or unsuccessfully deal with students (generally and particularly), subject matter and classroom control. Success means that most of the students most of the time are engaged in learning the subject matter in an orderly, predictable environment. Unsuccessful means that most of the students are not engaged in learning the subject matter ("they are not on-task") in an unruly, unpredictable environment. Most of the lounge talk at CJHS implied that the teacher was generally successful, but that particular students, particular times of the year, e.g., immediately before holidays, or particular elements of the subject matter could challenge this general climate. On these peculiarities, since they were normal and to be expected, CJHS teachers freely offered advice. They tell each other about particular students and how they did or did not deal with them. Advice might range from "grin and bear it--nobody's doing anything for that kid" to "I've made him a helper" to "let's see the Vice-Principal about getting her suspended." They also offer freely advice about how to deal with Monday mornings, Friday afternoons, the days before holidays, the hour after a "good" or "bad" all-school assembly, or after two kids have been in a fight. These were normally "rough" times, and required "hard" work. Discussions about subject matter were less frequent, but the few noted suggested that teachers try to make needed materials as much "fun" as possible, e.g., games, crossword puzzles, or prizes, and not beyond the comprehension of most students.

Discussions of classroom realities at CJHS created primitive generalizations about teaching, and about special problems which could be anticipated. These generalizations sought to give advice to all teachers in the building. One popular generalization was: "Children of this age group get bored very

quickly. Therefore, change activities every ten minutes." While many teachers subcribed to this generalization about the realities of teaching at CJHS, a few debunked this claim. In the lounge some doubters would challenge such a generalization by pointing to their successes by violating such a rule in their classrooms. Others would claim that while they wished they could shift that frequently, their subject matter would not permit such a helter skelter approach.

Discussions about classroom realities, and the primitive generalizations found in such discussions, are another set of criteria which may be applied to changes proposed for classrooms. These shared wisdoms about the ways of teaching serve as screens to filter proposals for change. These primitive generalizations, not shared by all teachers and rarely verified except by individual classrooms and teachers, serve as part of the teacher lore of the school. They suggest that there are larger, shared understandings about what is going on in this place. Such understandings freely admit that teachers are particular (much as students) but also are typical (much as students).

Changes proposed for classrooms, then, may be examined not only from the perspective of a unique and separate teacher but also from the perspective of a few generalized teacher understandings. Teachers at CJHS emphasized, for example, the nature of this age group of children. While they did not seem to discuss where this generalized understanding came from, e.g., wisdom of other teachers, training in schools of education, or self-experience, they did assume that other teachers would understand the phrase and its larger implications. There seemed to be an implicit sense that "kids were like that." At CJHS this meant, for example, that 7th, 8th and 9th graders varied in terms of physical maturity, sexual awareness, anger, and attention.

Proposed changes in classes or the school which did not account for the characteristics of students of this age group will receive harsh treatment from teachers who see this as one of the important characteristic of schooling at CJHS.

The notion of classroom realities also bears on the loose coupling literature. This literature often suggests organizations are so complex that few can grasp their entirety. In CJHS, teachers not only grasp the entirety of the organization, but also they recognize those places when particularism was necessary. Classroom realities underscored both the relatively stable, enduring structures and the necessary arenas of instability and temporariness. These outbursts of equivocality were simply part of the everyday life of dealing with students of this age group, and a series of routine countermeasures were available to restore the regularities of classroom life. In a sense, teachers possessed not only a map of the larger organization but also a detailed and finely gridded map of particular neighborhoods. These maps suggested understanding and alertness, not significant change.

Teacherhood Problems and School Change. The problems of teacherhood serve to aggregate teachers. Concerns about the rewards of teaching, the effects of teaching on the self, the public image of teachers or the failures of others pull teachers toward some sort of a center. These problems press for commonality, for common solution, and for the assignment of common enemies.

Teachers in the lounge at CJHS found colleagueship in teacherhood problems. Colleagueship meant that these were issues all teachers faced, though they might disagree heatedly about the resolution of these problems. These discussions suggested that as teachers they had common problems to resolve. Each and every teacher, for example, had to weigh the costs and benefits of spending large amounts of time in the company of junior high age students.

It was small wonder that most who remained could jest about the consequences of living with kids. The jest implied that these kids provided greater benefits than costs.

Coupled with classroom realities, teacherhood problems suggest that schools develop something resembling a culture. This culture is best described as common answers to common problems. Each and every teacher seems to resolve for himself or herself the nature of the classroom. But this individualized solution is embedded in the fact that teachers are organizationally arranged, subject matter specialized, and face nearly random groups of students. These environmental arrangements shape teacher solutions to classroom realities. These larger solutions are also molded by the answers created by teachers to teacherhood problems. The group affirmations about the legitimate joys of teaching or the benefits of working with students provide alternatives for individual teachers not necessary provided by discussions fixed only on classroom realities. For example, some individual teachers never come successfully to grips with dealing with intellectually slow students. Discussions of classroom realities suggests that individual teachers may deal with such students in several ways. A few teachers are never successful, even when they use these techniques. But at the level of teacherhood problems, it is recognized that all teachers have favorite groups or types of students, and that all teachers have those students they do not work with well. Individual classroom teachers worry about slow student success or failure find comradeship in teacherhood discussions about general characteristics of teachers.

The culture of the school provides common answers for individual teachers as they grapple with problems of classroom realities and teacherhood problems. The CJHS lounge became a place to propose what this culture was

like, to argue about or to amplify particular cultural dimensions, and to locate oneself as a teacher among other teachers. The lounge thus served as a navigation beacon for many teachers. Upon entering, they could propose where they were, they could contrast their plottings with their colleagues, and they could steer the same or set a new course.[5/]

These efforts by CJHS teachers to clarify individuality and commonality suggest that those who propose changes at the school level must be aware not only of classroom realities but also of teacherhood problems. Changes will be screened against the larger canvas of teacherhood problems such as the failure of others or the public image of teachers. These teacherhood problems serve as criteria for school level change just as classroom realities serve as criteria for classroom change. At both levels, changes must deal with complex cultural linkages among these criteria. A change aimed at modifying the joys of teaching in classrooms, for example, must also be screened for its teacherhood consequences such as the failure of others, the public image of teachers or the effects of teaching on self. While it is doubtful that teacher talk in the lounge of CJHS would systematically examine each of these elements, during fuller deliberation of the change teacher talk would usually touch on each element.

[5/] Much of this report has sought to comprehend how teachers "created" their world. How did teachers put all the events of the school day together to provide for themselves and their peers a coherent and reasonable world? The same question could well be asked of students. At CJHS students typically confront seven different teachers talking about seven different subjects and demanding seven different sets of studentmanship each day. How are these elements integrated? Could we suggest that each student has a picture of the realities demanded by teachers in each of their rooms, that students have general images of what it means to be a student, and that students develop some notion of an educational system? For teachers, these elements seem to provide powerful means for explaining much of their behavior. Could the same things be said for students? See, for example, the work of Becker et al. (1961) on medical students.

Such a view suggests a coherence and unity that few CJHS teachers reflected in the lounge. Individual teachers might highlight certain dimensions or even be ignorant of others (Fernandez, 1965). But if these teachers spent enough time in the lounge (the luxury afforded this investigator), they would eventually come to these topics. CJHS teachers might come to see themselves as separated by organizational structure and subject matter specialization, to realize that their unique classrooms create with fairly common realities, and to understand that as teachers they share fairly conventional problems.

Teachers would also come to see that the various social settings in the school building are heterogeneous. In a third, and final contrast with the loose coupling literature, schools are best viewed as a collection of extremely diverse social settings. Classrooms, hallways, and lounges are not alike--they are very different settings. Schools are not homogeneous settings, albeit the larger languages of the educational system acts as if classrooms, teachers and students were constants. By inspecting the similarities and differences in sites, a more subtle view is possible of teacher realities and teacherhood problems.

Educational System and Education Change. Teachers at CES and CJHS had a sense of an educational system and of their place in this larger system. In contrast to the rather precise and detailed knowledge these teachers possessed about their classrooms, knowledge about the system seemed vague, uncodified, and distressingly abstract.

In the first place, teachers at CES and CJHS had a sense generally of what went on in elementary schools, junior high schools, secondary schools, and colleges and universities. This sense seemed to be made up in part of recollections of their own experiences. This investigator, for example, recalls

vividly a female elementary teacher in her mid- or late-fifties over coffee recalling the prank that she and her classmates "pulled" on their third-grade teacher. None of her kids, she remarked, were as mean as that bunch of hoodlums. A second, and not unexpected, element of this sense comes from talks with other teachers. These sharings recall what has gone on in other schools where they may have been students or teachers. Teachers in the CJHS lounge frequently compared, for example, these experiences in other schools to CJHS. A third source is training in higher education classes. This source is often seen as challenging and often wrong. The CJHS lounge provided at the drop of a hat assessments, for example, of the worth of classes in history of education, philosophy of education or curriculum planning. Stories were told, with obvious relish, about certain professors at certain institutions. A fourth resource for many teachers were reports from their own children who were, or had been, students. Other teachers not only could recount their own experiences but also could substantiate what went on in schools by telling about what happened to their own youngsters. In a very real sense, then, the great majority of teachers went to schools similar to those they are teaching in, and older teachers who attended such schools were reinforced farther by the children as students. They know of little but this educational system.

This generalized sense of what the educational system was about, nonetheless, was uncodefied and vague. Junior high school teachers joked about the way elementary teachers spoke, but had little precise knowledge of what was taught in the second, fourth or sixth grades. Equally, elementary teachers knew junior high students had to take certain courses, but were vague about what that implied. Older teachers whose children had passed through the system had clear pictures of some teachers (usually very good or

very bad) and a few assignments (normally very good or very bad). The system seemed to be a larger abstraction, a larger but hazy image of what happened from kindergarten through a college degree. But the very haziness of the image enhanced its power. Each teacher was required to prepare present students for a future that was generally similar to the one recalled. But not knowing exactly meant that unless certain things were done now failure in the future might be guaranteed. Hence, current students were burdened with preparations for a hazy future need.

Stated differently, the sense of the educational system provided the gross overview for the teacher. Generated by examples such as the personal experiences of the teacher as a student, by the experiences of peers as students, and by being a student teacher, the system existed as boundaries which separate memories, recollections, dreams and learnings about education from fields such as politics or religion. These larger boundaries encompass the field of education and the fact that today is not yesterday. The educational system does change; older teachers can recall an almost perfect cycle of emphasis on basics, decline, freedom, and re-emphasis on basics. But these changes are usually produced by external pressures.

Time in the teaching role brings recognition that societal shifts affect the educational system. For example, a minority of CJHS teachers went to school with Blacks, and even fewer were in schools with handicapped students. Or, divorce was less common and more traumatic in their childhoods. These shiftings mean that what classrooms are and what teaching is remain constant sources of concerns. The day-to-day "with-it-ness" of the classroom is a reality (or set of realities) which not only must account for the larger systemic conceptions but also deal with constant shifts of students and their backgrounds, for instance. The vagueness of conceptions of the system

increases not only the systems power to hold attention (it may absorb new elements without change) but also the need for constant maintenance (will this subject matter appeal to these new children?).

Teacher talk in the lounge suggests a constant re-learning from what is happening for application to classroom realities and to teacherhood problems. The lounge also provide teachers a site to ponder with their colleagues how shifts in these topics may indicate possible changes in the educational system caused by societal changes. Are present students, for example, ruder than students of twenty years ago? Teacher questions and talk is not idle; it serves to define shared meanings for teachers about classrooms, teaching, and education writ large.

The sense of system that teacher possess is generally stable as a whole, but is in constant flux in part. The sense of the larger system could be likened to the general plot of a Hollywood movie of the 30's: boy meets girl; boy and girl fight; girl gets boy. The educational system as a success story goes something like this: good student learns; good student has right attitude; good student with learning and right attitude succeeds. The teacher becomes the major supporting actor in this story. But a second version exists. This general system horror story scenario is as follows: bad student resists learning; bad student has inappropriate attitudes; bad student with little learning and bad attitude fails. The teacher is a supporting actor pointing to the things the student must learn and the attitudes the student must correct. These two stories might account for the "A" and "F" students. The scenario for the average or "C" student would be: student has limited abilities to learn but tries; student has attitudes of a good citizen; student leads a normal, happy life.

Teacher talk reviews these scenarios much the way movie critics screen the latest hits from Hollywood. Teachers, for instance, must factor into these everpresent plots issues such as drugs or single parent families. These "new" societal elements force reassessment of specific elements of the standard plots. Do drugs immediately mark off a "bad" student? Are single parent families the external cause of bad attitudes rather than the internal motivations of the student? The larger script holds true: the details need changing. These script changes, these interpretative reworkings, occur often in the teachers' lounge.

These reworkings also seem to have one other characteristic. Because teachers are aware of the uniqueness of individual classrooms, they often believe that other teachers may have solved problems they now face. Other teachers in their building, or in their subject field, or professors at some near or far university may have a reasonable answer to their current, nagging problem. Some expert may truly know what advice should be freely given. If the advice is received, individual teachers will filter it to fit their particular style. Until such advice is received, they will continue in working out their own immediate solution. Hence, teachers continually look in their immediate environments for solutions--but with limited hope. This process of external search makes teachers not only sensitive and aware of the views of others but open and candid in telling others how they handle problems. Swapping involves not only receiving but also telling: it also involves expecting answers from the environment for difficult immediate problems.

The larger, but hazy, image of education as a system serves as the criterion for assessments of educational change. Those who would propose new goals for education, who would see the system serving new or different clients, or who might drastically reduce the scope of education, face CES and

CJHS teachers who have notions of what education is all about. This sense of the educational system seems a much less precise marker than either classroom realities or teacherhood problems. In that sense it seems to be a more projective, or a more invitational, media for CES and CJHS teachers. Teachers in the CJHS lounge, for example, could worry about the inclusion of handicapped children into the school or about the growing issue of bilingual education. These worries seemed disconnected from very many real world instances in either of these categories that these teachers experienced. Simply, few CJHS teachers were dealing in their classrooms with handicapped children as part of classroom realities. Few CJHS teachers had any bilingual students. But these issues emerged in discussions of education as a system because many teachers were not certain whether or not handicapped or bilingual were a part of the system. Handicapped children could be dealt with; but ought they be taught in regular classrooms? Bilingual teachers could be found, and students taught appropriately; but ought bilingual students be taught in a language other than English? These were topics which were important to the system.

Teachers at CES and CJHS saw themselves and colleagues in a generalized educational system. The further the system was from their particular classroom and school, the more abstract and vague it became. But the system never vanished because teachers themselves, and their students, were a part of this system. In one sense, the system drove teachers at CES and CJHS to do what they did; in another sense teachers clearly saw what they did as the system. Alterations in their work might have consequences for later stages of the system. Thus, efforts to make classrooms easier for students in the third grade might have long range, and disasterous consequences, for these students when they become ninth graders.

It was also difficult for teacher to see the system as a "failure." Lounge talk suggests and promotes a view of the world of the school as orderly and predictable. Problems created within the system are resolvable: there are not fatal flaws within the system. There is no ideology of discontent, while there is acceptance of minor problems surfacing, being resolved, and the system remaining. It is hard, nearly impossible, work in the lounge to link classroom disruptions to the failure of the system. The problem was located in others, not in the system.

Hence, what teachers and students did in their classrooms was not only an end in itself but also a vital means for students who would complete the system. Equally, the efforts of other teachers in their school contribute not only to the maintenance of the system but its successful impact on students. Teachers in CES and CJHS were linked because their fates were bound up in how well students moved through the system. In their unique classrooms, most teachers taught most students skills in particular subject matters. As students moved through the system, they were provided opportunities to not only enrich these fields but also to use them to grasp new subject matter by new and specially trained teachers operating in their classrooms.

This mutual support often was illuminated by concerns at the junior high about the failure of elementary teachers to teach, and the wary smile that indicated former junior high students would soon be found wanting by secondary teachers. But the few gaps seemed easily remedial for most students. The realities of all classrooms suggested that few students escaped, and then only for a moment. Few successfully evaded the relentless pursuit of teachers. Somewhere the system would match student and teacher, and the system would have another success story. Simply ask any teacher.

Summary. This section has presented one view of the relationships among teacher separateness, classroom realities, teacherhood problems, educational systems and change. This view has contended that any single proposal for change may be seen by teachers as involving three different arenas for change (classroom; school; and, system) and three different criteria for change (teacher separateness and classroom realities; teacherhood problems; and, educational system).

These notions--the uniqueness of my classroom, the general sense of common classroom realities, the notion of teacherhood problems, and the larger notion of an educational system--are the stuff of teacher talk. As central foci of teacher talk, these notions allow teachers to talk to other teachers in ways that clarify both individually and collectively what teaching is about. As an individual, any teacher may compare her or his position on aspects of the classroom, on being a teacher or on the nature of the educational system. As a collectivity, teachers author jointly by discussion the nature of classrooms, teaching, and the system. These discussions underscore commonalities and differences, and make possible a common lore. These discussions serve as "triangulation" points for individuals and the collectivity.

Summary

This brief summary recaps and speculates about some of the implications that might be drawn from the study.

Recap. Teachers at CJHS and CES are, in one clear sense of the word, segregated from each other by the deliberate organizational pattern found in schools, by the training they have received, and by the unique mix of students and experiences they have. But uniqueness at the classroom level is tempered by four realities all teachers at CJHS and CES faced. All teachers had to resolve in their classroom problems including ambiguity of control, particular students, nature of the age group of students, and necessity for teaching subjects. The resolution of each of these realities was accomplished by each individual teacher, but within a rich and varied field of freely given advice. The advice offered by others could be accepted, reshaped or ignored because of the uniqueness of each individual teacher ("style"). Teachers in CES and CJHS also faced problems simply because they were teachers. These problems of teacherhood involved teacher rewards, effects of teaching on self, public images of teachers, and failure of others. These problems were frequent topics of conversation in the lounge at CJHS as teachers sought to define the joys of their profession. Finally, these schemes suggested that teachers at CJHS and CES had an image of an educational system. This system provided vague pictures of what generally went on at other levels in the system as well as a sense of what must be accomplished if students were to succeed in the system.

Speculations. Four particular notions will be the objects of speculation. They are: amount of teacher talk; the sense of system; boundaries; and, teacher's knowledge.

1. Amount of teacher talk. Teachers at CES and CJHS spent large amounts of time talking about classroom realities, teacherhood problems and the educational system. To be sure, they did tell jokes (sometimes "dirty"), swap yarns about their past, brag about their families, set up dates for single teachers, worry about the cost of groceries or discuss this winter's fuel bills. But they spent an inordinate amount of time talking as teachers talking to other teachers. Those in the lounge at CJHS found their teaching and their students to be endlessly fascinating. They seemed never to become weary of tales about classrooms, tips about handling situations and informative gossip about particular students.

Many of the colleagues of this investigator suggest that this is not a characteristic of all schools. They suggest, instead, that some schools are like CJHS and CES while others would have lounges where such teacher talk would be rare. One line of inquiry suggested by teacher talk relates such talk to the quality of the school. It may be that as teacher talk increases, schools quality increases, e.g., awareness of innovations, improved attendance and/or increases on standardized tests. Speculations about this relationship may suggest that good principals facilitate teacher talk, that good teachers are good teacher talkers (and listeners), and that good schools are staffed by good talkers. Or, a lot of teacher talk may inhibit change. Unfortunately, we know little about teacher talk.

2. The sense of the system. Teachers at CES and CJHS clearly saw education as a system. This system was composed of individual teachers trained to teach grades or subject matter, age-grouped batches of children, classes of specified time, and schools which physically housed and separated teachers and their students from other teachers and students. Most of the teachers at CES and CJHS had gone to schools similar to those they now

taught in, and many had children in such schools at this very moment. The schools these CES and CJHS teachers worked in were what they had come to see as "usual," as "traditional."

This sense of normality about the educational system suggests further speculations. First, what happened to all the reforms of the 1960's and 1970's? The lounge at CJHS seemed immune to discussions of sweeping educational changes. CES did display multi-age group classrooms, e.g., 4, 5, 6, but little else of a reformist temper. Teachers in both buildings did have different racial mix of students in class, some of the teachers and administrators were themselves from minority groups, but little sense of using the schools as an instrument of social reform lingered in either school. Second, what are the sources of teachers' views of the educational system? The contributions of experience as a student, as a teacher and as a parent, for example, need to be sorted out. Key questions here become: (1) how do individual teachers "construct" from such diverse sources an "image" of what being a teacher is? and, (2) how do individual teachers "weigh" claims about "newness," e.g., innovations, students, policies? What are the relative impacts of self, peers, and system? Third, what are the larger consequences of the notions of a system? While the notions of a system seem to dictate a rather traditional and stable view of the school, teachers at the individual level seem to be constantly tampering with their classrooms. Are teachers aware of differences between a relatively stable system and a constantly evolving classroom? These suggest some lines of inquiry suggested by the sense of education system displayed by CES and CJHS teachers.

3. Boundaries. The sense of the system seems to provide boundaries within the system and between the system and its environment. Teachers in the CJHS lounge seemed to know, for example, their place in the system as

junior high teachers, and to have clear expectations about the place of other insiders, e.g., administrators, and outsiders, e.g., parents.

Such expectations seemed thwarted on occasion. Others inside the system did not always act wisely nor did outsiders always support the system. These failures of others caused grief for teachers, but were not examined for their general validity by teachers. Teachers, for example, rarely felt external criticisms about other teachers were justified. The teachers in the CJHS lounge also had a hard time grasping the realities that administrators faced. The world the administrators faced often seemed a different world, and one with very different boundaries, from that of teachers. More inquiry into the functions and dysfunctions of boundaries within the system (and of the system itself) might illuminate problems of teacherhood.

4. Teacher's knowledge. What teachers know must be heard; it cannot be read. Teaching is a non-literate, oral culture. What is so striking about the teaching culture is that its oral nature perpetuates the need to spend great amounts of time talking about teaching, accentuates the sense of a unified and common educational system, and substantiates the imagined boundaries with the system and between the system and the environment.

This oral culture suggests lines of inquiry about its content and validity. This report has suggested some initial categories for content. But little can be inferred about validity for classroom activities from lounge talk. What, for example, is the relation between what teachers do in the classroom and say in the lounge? What kinds of evidence do teachers marshall when they argue about their classrooms or schools or system before administrators? Parents? Fellow teachers? How easy is it for teachers generate a common language that would facilitate cross subject or school discussions? The oral culture of teaching may hinder or may help change, but on the whole oral

culture are often seen as conservative. In education we know too little of the consequrnces of this non-literacy. The spoken word may not convey the details necessary for assisting those who promote change, while the lack of written records may induce many to try something.

In contrast to the oral culture of teachers is the given tradition of schools as places for sixth grade teachers of social studies to teach sixth grade students. This managerial tradition of organizing schools seems to persist. The relationship of this structural tradition and teacher oral culture deserves further attention.

These lines of inquiry obviously may be expanded or put into some priority ranking. They are offered because they suggest that while teachers are segregated in the social settings of schools, this segregation is at least partially overcome by teachers in lounges talking shop talk. This talk suggests that teachers face both unique and common problems in their classrooms, that being a teacher presents problems which must be resolved, and that teachers often see themselves as part of an educational system.

References

R. G. Barker, Ecological Psychology: Concepts and Methods for Studying the Environment of Human Behavior. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968.

R. G. Barker and P. V. Gump, Big School, Small School. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964.

Rebecca Barr and Robert Dreeben, "Instruction in Classrooms," in Lee S. Shulman (ed.), Review of Research in Education, 5, 1977. Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, 1978, 89-162.

Howard S. Becker, Blanche Geer, Everett C. Hughes, Anselm L. Strauss, Boys in White: Student Culture in Medical Schools. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Andre Benoit, "A Note on Decision-Making Processes in the Politics of Education," Comparative Education Review, 19 (February, 1975), 155-168.

Paul Berman and Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin, An Exploratory Study of School District Adaptation. R-2010-NIE. Santa Monica: Rand, May, 1979.

Charles E. Bidwell, "The School as a Formal Organization" in James G. March (ed.), Handbook of Organizations. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965, 972-1022.

Egon Brunswik, Perception and the Representative Design of Psychological Experiments. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956.

Anne Buttimer, "Social Space in Interdisciplinary Perspective," Geographical Review, 59 (July, 1969), 417-426.

Michael D. Cohen and James G. March, Leadership and Ambiguity: The American College President. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974.

Phillips A. Cusick, Inside High School: The Student's World. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973.

Walter Doyle, "Paradigms for Research on Teacher Effective," in Lee S. Shulman (ed.), Review of Research in Education, 5, 1977. Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, 1978, 163-198.

Robert B. Edgerton and L. L. Langness, Methods and Styles in the Study of Culture. San Francisco: Chandler and Sharp Publishers, 1974.

Rachel Elboim-Dror, "Some Characteristics of the Education Policy Formation System," Policy Sciences, 1 (1970) 231-253.

James W. Fernandez, "Symbolic Consensus in a Fang Reformative Cult," American Anthropologist, 67 (1965), 902-929.

Andrew G. Frank, "Goal Ambiguity and Conflicting Standards: An Approach to the Study of Organization," Human Organization, 17 (Winter, 1958-59), 8-13.

Emil Haller, "On Moving to Smaller Rooms," Administrator's Notebook, 15:6 (February, 1966), 1-4.

Mark Hanson and Flora I. Ortiz, "The Management Information System and the Control of Educational Change: A Field Study," Sociology of Education, 48 (1975), 257-275.

Dean Harper, "The Growth of Bureaucracy in School Systems," American Journal of Economics and Sociology, 24 (July, 1965), 261-271.

A. Ray Heisel and D. J. Willower, "Toward Definition and Measurement of Pupil Control Behavior," Journal of Educational Administration, 12 (May, 1974), 114-123.

Jacob S. Kounin, Discipline and Group Management in Classrooms. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970.

Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch, Organization and Environment: Managing Dfferentiation and Integration. Cambridge: Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, 1967.

John Lofland, Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1971.

James G. March and John P. Olsen, Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1976.

Wilbert E. Moore and M. M. Tumin, "Some Social Functions of Ignorance," American Sociological Review, 14 (1949), 787-795.

Janet Newberry, "The Barrier Between Beginning and Experienced Teachers," Journal of Educational Administration, 16 (May, 1978), 46-56.

Thomas K. Prebble, "Goal Dissensus and Educational Change," Journal of Educational Administration, 16 (May, 197), 7-18.

Louis M. Smith and Pat M. Keith, Anatomy of Educational Innovation: An Organizational Analysis of an Elementary School. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1971.

James P. Spradley, The Ethnographer Interview. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

Ann Swidler, Organizations Without Authority: Dilemmas of Social Control in Free Schools. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Willard Waller, The Sociology of Teaching. New York: John Wiley, 1965.

W. Keith Warner and A. E. Havens, "Goal Displacement and the Intangibility of Organizational Goals," Administrative Science Quartery, 12 (March, 1968), 539-555.

Karl E. Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," Administrative Science Quarterly, 21 (March, 1976), 1-19.

Donald J. Willower, "Some Comments on Inquiries on School and Pupil Control," Teachers College Record, 77 (December, 1975), 219-230.

Appendix: Methodology of the Study

This study was conducted using semi-structured interviews and participant observation techniques. This appendix chronicles the evolution of the study and of the various uses of these techniques as well as some problems faced by the investigator.

The Time Line of the Study

The initial idea for the study surfaced in a 1979 graduate class. We had been discussing studies of schools as organizations, and had been reviewing the use of the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) scale. Inspecting the scale closely and reviewing some of the literature using the PCI (particularly Helsel and Willower, 1974) raised questions about the applicability of the PCI. What became interesting was to see that answers on the PCI--the "first" site--did not transer well to the classroom--the "second" site.

To stimulate discussion I asked graduate students in the class to make a list of "safe" and "unsafe" topics of conversation in their school using as sites the lounge, the administrator's office, the faculty lunchroom (if different from the lounge), and their classrooms, with and without pupils present. Three examples of student work, identified by school level and role, are displayed in Figure A1.

This discussion and the re-analysis of the PCI materials strongly suggested that these students from different school systems, different levels and different roles could not only easily describe the "proper" way to talk in various locations in their schools but also that the safety of topics varied greatly by site. Further research work in the library by students and me underscored both the notion of sampling sites and the effort to see how segregation of sites might affect schools.

LEVEL: Secondary ROLE: Teacher

	SAFE	UNSAFE
Lounge:	1. Families of faculty members 2. Activities of school assemblies 3. The inadequacy of other high schools 4. Students 5. Administrators (when not present)	1. Incompetent colleagues 2. Students getting out of class for extra-curricular 3. Curriculum disagreements (.e.g. English more valuable than home ec.) 4. Special students-spec. ed.
Admin Office Vice-Prin:	1. Curriculum 2. Budget 3. Personal leave (time off) 4. Special course requirements 5. Particular student problems	1. Other faculty members 2. Non-inforced school policy 3. Misplaced priorities of admin. 4. Inadequate handling of admin. problems w/ reference to teachers and/or students (i.e. not supporting teachers)
Faculty Lunchroom	1. Activity of the day 2. The culinary delights!	1. Administrators 2. For the most part: same things listed in lounge
Classroom Pupils:	1. Course or equip. needs 2. Anything that is quickly handled, not soliciting opinion orally--OK if written	1. Other students 2. Other teachers 3. Administrators
No pupils:	1. Too dependent on other teacher; if friend, anything could be discussed	1. The importance of each other's subject matter in relationship to "what the kids really need is."

Figure A1. Three examples of student responses. Example A: Secondary Teacher.

LEVEL: Secondary

ROLE: Administrator

Area 1. Faculty Lounge

Safe Topics	Unsafe Topics
Student discipline	Integrated curriculum
Prep. time	Student achievement
Class size	In-service
Marking of students' assignments	
Evaluation procedures	

Area 2. Admin. Office

Safe Topics	Unsafe Topics
Inservice	Parent evaluation
Student discipline	Student eval. of teacher
	Mainstreaming

Area 3. Faculty Lunchroom

Safe Topics	Unsafe Topics
The quality of extra-curric. activities	Job satisfaction
Job enrichment	Student achievement
Football	

Area 4. Classroom

	Safe Topics	Unsafe Topics
Pupils Present:	Student achievement	Student discipline
	Student motivation	Cheating, busing
Pupils Absent:	Cooperation	
	Courses offered	

Figure A1. Example B: Secondary administrator.

ROLE: Admin.

LEVEL: Middle School

	Safe	Unsafe
faculty lounge	School lunches	In-service
	Kids	Christmas
	University Courses	Program
	Dress	The Principal
	Janitors	Grades
	Parents	Plan Time
admin. office.	Curriculum	Scheduling
	Football	Evaluation
	Textbooks	Personal Days
	Dropouts	Absenteeism
	Truancy	Secretaries
	Drugs	School Boards
	Weather	Halloween
	Phi Delta Kappa	Fed. Gov.
	John Wayne	Sat. Scores
		Tenures
	Nothing	Everything
classroom w/ students	Perhaps	God
	"Name the 50 states,"	KKK
	Little else	Peanut Butter
		Etc.
classroom w/o students	Television	Room Arrangement
	Other Faculty Members	Decorations
	Plant Life	Condition of Desk Tops
	Jogging	Textbooks

Figure A1. Example C: Middle school administrator.

The initial proposal to The National Institute of Education not only linked this proposed work to organizational research but also depended upon interviews with a convenience sample of teachers and administrators. In negotiations with Institute personnel, this first proposal was modified to an intensive study of two sites--an elementary school and a junior high school in a nearby community.

Discussions with the central office personnel of City School District #100 (a "false" name) about the project centered on two points. First, central office personnel suggested the word "segregation" would mean something very different to the district's administrators and teachers. "Segregation" was replaced by "how teachers resolve differences among themselves about what should be taught." Such a substitution seemed warranted because it permitted teachers to talk about differences and similarities among teachers and to talk about how they talked in various school settings. Second, central office personnel emphasized the need to get permission in both schools. I visited with each principal, gave them a copy of the proposal, and met and discussed the project with both faculties. Both schools' personnel asked that I begin my interviewing and observation after the first grading period (October 20).

Beginning in late October I began my interviewing and observations. On October 28 an introductory letter was put in each teacher's mailbox in the schools (Figure A2). But almost immediately the first major problem developed. The teachers in the elementary school literally had no time during the day either to be interviewed or to interact with other teachers when they could be observed. It became apparent that this elementary site would be of little value for this project. It was also becoming apparent that the teachers lounge was one of the few places in the building

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

College of Education
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, HIGHER,
AND CONTINUING EDUCATION
333 Education Building
Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 333-2155

October 28, 1980

Dear Faculty Member:

This brief letter serves to introduce me to you and to ask for your cooperation in a research project.

My name is Marty Burlingame, and I'm currently a professor in the College of Education here at the University of Illinois. I've been on the faculty since 1975, working in Educational Administration and Supervision.

I've received a small grant from The National Institute of Education to see how teachers resolve differences among themselves about what should be taught. The research evidence we have about this problem is mixed. Some research has found that teachers seem to generally agree about what should be taught. Other studies suggest differences among teachers are resolved by voting or by consensus. Still other research reports suggest teachers seem to ignore differences and go their own ways.

My own experiences as a high school teacher provide little insight into how differences among teachers are resolved. Over the next three or four months I hope to visit with you about your views on this issue. These visits will be informal (although I will take notes), will try to explore the range of options about resolving differences, and will protect your confidentiality in every way. I am interested in your views and opinions, and expect them to range widely--I do not seek a "definitive" answer.

You will see me wandering around the halls, the office or the faculty room chatting with others. I hope to get to know you, to discuss with you this issue, and to get your opinions. When the project is completed--about mid-July--I will send copies to the school for your examination. I hope we can work together to make this project successful.

Yours truly,

Marty Burlingame

Marty Burlingame
Professor

MB:d

Figure A2. Introductory letter.

where teachers not only got together in reasonable numbers but also talked to each other. Neither classrooms nor administrative offices seemed to be meeting places.

By the second week in November all my attention was fixed on the junior high school, and particularly the lounge. Between October 27, 1980 and January 30, 1981, I visited this school 25 times, averaging slightly more than 2 hours per visit. Usually I spent from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm or from 12:00 pm to 3:30 pm in the building. The majority of this time was spent in the lounge "observing." Generally I spent Monday and Wednesday mornings and Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in the lounge. These times "fit" with my University responsibilites of teaching and advisement. I also increasingly came to eat my lunch in the lounge. During lunch many teachers were about.

During this time span I also interviewed 11 teachers. These interviews ranged from 20 minutes to 50 minutes. The maximum limit was set by the teacher's preparation period. As the interviews and tapes accumulated (of the 11, nine were recorded), I moved more and more to a structured format. Teachers were handed six 4" X 6" cards (See Figure A3). These teachers were asked to use these cards as guides. Most had no trouble in dealing with this format. Only one teacher rejected this approach, and instead proceeded to "lecture" me on scientific curriculum making. (This lecture was recorded.) By the Christmas holidays I had some 300 pages of field notes, some 60 pages of "interpretations," and nine taped interviews. I had been organizing these materials using as guides the works of Lofland (1971) and Spradley (1979).

On Tuesday, December 2, I presented an informal seminar at the university to graduate students and faculty. It was my first conscious

1

IN DECIDING WHAT TO TEACH TODAY, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD BE "HELPFUL" SOURCES OF IDEAS

1) Principal
2) Supervisor
3) Other teachers of your grade/subject
4) Other teachers
5) In-service workshops
6) Conferences
7) Textbooks, teacher guides, student workbooks
8) Your past experiences as a teacher
9) Students
10) Parents/community members

2

11) Professional journals
12) Books about education other than texts
13) Others...

Figure A3. Cards for interviews with teachers.

3

IN DECIDING WHAT TO TEACH TODAY, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD NOT BE "HELPFUL" SOURCES OF IDEAS

1) Principal
2) Supervisor
3) Other teachers of your grade/subject
4) Other teachers
5) In-service workshops
6) Conferences
7) Textbooks, teachers guides, students workbooks
8) Your past experiences as a teacher
9) Students
10) Parents/community members
11) Professional journals

4

12) Books about education other than texts
13) Others...

5

DO YOU USE IDEAS IN YOUR CLASSES FROM

1) Pre-service college or university classes
2) College textbooks
3) Former college or university professors
4) Graduate college or university classes
5) Graduate textbooks
6) Recent graduate school professors
7) Classmates in graduate classes
8) Others...

6

DO YOU EVER GET IDEAS YOU TRY IN YOUR CLASSES FROM

1) Magazines
2) Newspapers
3) TV
4) Movies
5) Travel
6) Others...

effort to order the information, and I taped both presentations and my colleagues' criticisms. During the last two weeks in December and the first in January I reviewed this tape, re-organized all other materials (usually by making "piles" of notes), and wrote a first draft. The draft was an act of discovery for my own benefit. I tried diligently to "make sense" of the collected information.

I returned to the junior high school the second week in January and made my last observaton January 29, 1981. The work in January was focused on clarifying issues raised in December by the preliminary discussion and draft. In contrast to observations done earlier, many of these in January seemed "confirmatory."

During late January and early February I reviewed materials on interviewing, participant observation, and ethnography in general. I tried to become sensitive not only to my own biases but also to the way my presence "changed" the site. I also worried about translating a rather chaotic scene into a place where "themes" could be stated. (I am still worried about these issues.)

In March and April I prepared a second draft. About 90 percent of the first draft writing was discarded, but the notions of teacher classroom realities and teacherhood problems persisted and were clarified. They were fleshed out during these months. By late March I had also become intrigued by education as a "system." Much of April was consumed with seeing the relation of the system and these data. May and June were re-writing months, with a target date of completion set for July 4 (symbolic).

Some Problems

Interpretation:

One of the really big problems I'm facing is not looking dumb. There I sit in the teachers lounge, watching, listening, taking notes. They (as nice people will) draw me into the conversation. I check the time, and make some notes. Every once in a while I'll write something that I know these teachers must be completely baffled about. "Why did he write that down?" "Everybody knows that." "He's dumb--or a spy." Or, else I'll be interviewing a teacher and probe and I get this look that means "Don't you know that? Here you are a professor, and you don't see that basic point?" It makes me feel like I've asked Walter Payton why he runs toward the goal line with a football. Everybody knows that, dummy! I worry that it may hurt the quality of my relationship, even more than taking notes in an obviously sensitive situation.

Interpretation:

There I was, sitting at one of the lounge tables, eating my sandwich and chatting with two teachers. At the next table one of the teachers is telling about how he dealt with a kid, and I desparately wanted to hear and to take notes. But that would have been really rude to my table mates. At the next pause I glanced around and realized there were fourteen people in the lounge--and I had no way of following the majority of conversations. What was I missing? No wonder anthropologists use not only single informants or very small groups (families) to interview or ritual situations with actors playing parts for an audience--you can't do (too strong!) an ethnography of a crowd. (TV camera panning ball park or stadium.) Even if I could tape (secretly) the lounge there would be no way of tracking.

The opening quotes from "Interpretations" are the key problems to be discussed. They are the problem of (1) not looking dumb and (2) multiple conversations. The selection of these two for emphasis in this section indicates neither that these were the only problems (they simply weren't) nor that these were the most important (they probably weren't, but they caught my eye most frequently).

Dumb. The problem of appearing dumb ultimately became not only a methodological issue but a key to understanding the notion of system. As a methodological issue, I became concerned early on in the observations and interviews that teacher would see me as not understanding their job. Such a lack of understanding did not seem totally normal for a professor

in a nearby university. I worried that some teachers might feel I was simply "out of it" or that I was simply "putting them on." I tried to counter this concern by stressing that my own experiences were limited to high school students. Hence, I was unfamiliar on an experiential level with junior high students and schools, and really did not understand the intricacies of junior high teaching.

While I hope these assertions "cooled out" concerns about my motives and mental capacities, this situation also got me to wondering about why I would be expected to know all about schooling. What began to emerge was the notion that teachers at all levels were expected to know the gross characteristics of the schools from kindergarden to graduate school. These characterizations of the way things are and of things to be done at various times in differing schools seemed common to nearly all teachers. At their particular level and in their subject fields teachers were experts; but teachers also had a good sense of the broad span of schooling in America.

As time passed, I found it harder to play "dumb." I increasingly "tested" teachers about what I now knew about junior high schools. Usually I asked if "such-and-so was normal" or if "such-and-so usually happened at this time of the year." I also found that I could display profitably and naturally a general sense of what elementary teachers did, but an ignorance of specific elementary teaching behaviors (and also a slight distaste for working with very young children). Yet, as the observation and interviewing ended, I still felt "nervous" about how some teachers might have viewed my "questions" about what teachers did or my "note-taking" while they chatted in the lounge.

Crowds. I never learned how to deal with the "mess" of conversations that occurred during lunch periods. On the one hand, lunch periods provided scenes with many teachers talking to other teachers. On the other hand, there was "no" way for me to observe what was happening. I became worried because for several teachers lunch was the "only" time they talked to their colleagues. I was missing important interactions for a number of the CJHS faculty. Ultimately I tried to sit at tables where some of these teachers were, but this was often simply not possible. In a sense, some of the teachers were never captured in easily observable frames--they were in either crowds or not around.

These, then, were problems which dominated my thinking during these months. Others came and went, or were simply ignored. For instance, I never figured out how to "gracefully" turn a page when taking notes. I always seemed to be in the wrong chair. I would catch an "interpretation" in what was supposed to be field data. These problems were important, but "dumbness" and "crowds" worried me the most.